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In My Head

by [Falco276](#)

Summary

Summary - Demyx didn't know how much longer he could go on living with the horrors that ran through his head.

Warnings- Characterdeath, rape, boylove, abuse, suicidal tendencies, mental institute, one make-out scene, I think that's it

Pairings- One-sided Zemyx, One-sided SoraDemyx, Passing AxelDemyx, SoraRiku, mentioned DemyxSetzer (man, he really gets around in this, doesn't he?), hinted SaixAxel

Chapter 1

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"Demyx."

The blonde froze when he heard his name spoken from the outside of his cell. He hated that voice. He despised it. The sound brought with it feelings of dread and horror and the need to get away from this hellhouse. It brought with it pain and suffering, horror and humiliation.

Demyx rubbed his wrists together anxiously. He didn't want the man behind the bars to come in. He never wanted that. But there was no getting away. He cried out in fear when he heard the key scrape the lock, the grating noise of the handle being twisted clawing at his ears. "No! No! No! Don't come in!" he screeched, rocking in the corner of his cell, having fallen to the ground when he had heard Professor Zexion's tormenting voice.

"Demyx, it is time for our weekly session. Get up please." The voice was sickeningly sweet, sending chills through Demyx's bruised body. Covering his face with his shackled hands, the blonde felt the tears coming already, whimpering as he shivered. He didn't want to know what torture he would be forced to endure today. His ears twitched when he heard metal on metal, something being placed on the screwed-down table beside his screwed-down bed. He didn't want to see what the noise could possibly mean for him today. "Demyx."

"I'm not crazy! You make me crazy! You make me crazy!" Demyx shrieked when he felt a hand on his shoulder, but he didn't fight against the short man. He knew it would hurt worse if he did.

"I'm here to help you, Demyx. You meant to kill those people. You're insane. It's my job to see if you can be fixed." The doctor leaned down, running a hand through the messy spikes of blonde that now hung limply around Demyx's face. "Be good for the next few minutes. We're being watched. See that mirror up there? My boss is out there. He's going to tap on the glass when he's leaving. Can you behave so that he doesn't come in here? You wouldn't want that. He would hurt you, Demyx." The murderer could do nothing but cower. He wanted to get away from the man that tormented his every conscious thought. With a bit of guidance from the slate-haired man, Demyx looked up into the mirror he tended to avoid, trying to see the man behind it. All he could see was the wall somewhere above his head.

"I-I'm ... insane?" Aquamarine orbs followed the hands that fell down into his lap, twisting and turning to be examined. The shackles were tight around the wrists, the nails were bitten off to the edge of the fingertips, the skin was dry and rough. They were the hands of an insane person. Someone who's been forced through way too much for one person to handle, he corrected in his mind, looking up into the one uncovered eye of the man who was supposed to be helping him. "I'll ... behave."

"Good. Now stand up please."

Nothing bad could happen. They were being watched. He was safe. He had to be. The evil doctor in front of him couldn't do anything. He just couldn't. But having been beaten too many times for not obeying the tormenter, Demyx couldn't just sit there. Forcing himself up on shaking legs, he jumped when he heard a small rattle behind the mirror he could now see his reflection in. The bags under his eyes were atrocious, not having been able to gain a proper sleep with all the screaming and moaning done by both he and the other patients locked in the depths of Hell itself. His complexion was pale and his cheeks were sunken. The one thought going through his head was the fact that he reminded himself of a crack-head. How could he convince them of his sanity

if every aspect of his appearance screamed he had none?

"Zexion, I'm finished for the night now. Do you need me to call you in any help for this one?"

The two looked to the door that had creaked open after the tap on the mirror, seeing an elderly man sticking his head in. Demyx wanted to scream at him to stay, to get help, to help him, but he remained silent, dropping his gaze to the floor. He knew when he was doomed. Zexion smiled an innocent smile at his boss before stroking Demyx's arm, in what he pretended was a comforting gesture.

"Thank you for the offer sir, but Demyx is a good boy. He won't cause any trouble. I will see you in the morning." A pleasant smile was still laced loosely on the periwinkle-haired man's lips, almost faltering when the elder doctor spoke again.

"Oh, Zexion, I would also like to ask what the pie is for."

"Demyx refuses to eat the food brought to him from the cafeteria so I was hoping that he would eat one of his favourite foods." Demyx squeezed his eyes shut, balling his fists. He would have gladly gobbled up any sort of food given to him, but Zexion always took it away before he could get anywhere near it. But the doctor would never believe that. There was no use arguing. He was going to go without food for another night.

"Alrighty then. Don't let him give you any trouble."

Zexion smirked, his grip on the younger's arm tightening when the door closed.

"Please ... Please don't hurt me..."

"There's nothing stopping me now, is there?"

The whimpering blonde yelped in pain when he was turned abruptly, being slammed into the wall, his face grating painfully with the coarse stone beneath the thrice-barred window. Through one of the few small squares, Demyx could see dusk descending over the criminally insane's prison, the green leaves on the tree in front of him glittering orange in the eerie light. In any other position he would have believed it to be truly beautiful, but he could feel his hands being forced up onto the bars somewhere around mid-abdomen, a second pair of handcuffs attaching him securely.

"Please ..." The tears were almost slipping into his eyes. Zexion liked it when he cried. He absolutely adored it. He knew that there would be no way in avoiding the droplets, but he had to keep them away for as long as he could. Fingertips grabbed his hips, causing another yelp to come out of the blonde, trying to pull himself closer to the bars. He hated when Zexion touched him. Nothing about it felt right. It all felt wrong. Every single aspect of what they were doing was wrong. Wrong, wrong, wrong!

"Demyx," the 'doctor' hissed, a warning note in his voice, forcing Demyx to comply with his wishes. Still with a firm grip on the younger's scantily clad hips, Zexion pulled him back, causing Demyx to stumble, being bent double at the waist. Starting to struggle against the position, finding the metal handcuffs digging into his wrists as he steadied himself, Demyx cried out when Zexion punched down on his back, forcing him down a little farther. "Now stay there."

Already the blonde's legs were shaking with the effort of keeping what little mass he had from falling to the floor. His hands shook with fear. He didn't want to find out what the pie was for. He knew it wasn't for eating. Would it still be finding its way inside of him? With Zexion bringing it closer, he didn't doubt it.

He screamed when a searing heat pressed against his back. The sizzling pie-plate was heavy and he could feel himself falter with the pain coursing through him. "You don't like it, do you, Demyx? Maybe this will make you learn to hold. Your. Tongue." Demyx could feel the large circle on his back burning and he let the tears slip from his aquamarine orbs.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" Demyx screamed again when Zexion pressed down on the supposed delicacy. "It won't happen again! I was hungry! I needed something to eat! I'm sorry!"

"How much did you tell him, Demyx? Did you tell him what I do to you?"

"No! No! I only - ahhhh! Oh god, it hurts! Stop, please!"

"What did you say to him?"

Demyx's watering gaze fell to the floor, desperation lining his features. "I-I ... I didn't say anything that would get you ... in trouble. I ... promise!"

"How do I know you're telling the truth, hmm? Why else would my boss have followed me tonight?"

"I don't know! Oh god, I don't know!"

Zexion shoved Demyx from behind, forcing his cheek to grate across the stone, another whine coming from the blonde, all he could manage in his fear. "Stop begging the Lord, you scum. He abandoned you the moment you killed those people."

Obviously, if He's letting me stay here to get tortured. Demyx would never say the words aloud, knowing the consequences if he did.

"Why did you kill them, Demyx?"

The murderer's thumb automatically went to the ring finger on his left hand, missing the feel of the gold ring that used to be there. He hadn't meant to kill them ... "They deserved it."

"Why?"

Demyx slammed his eyes shut when he felt fingers on his hips once more, the pain in his back crippling his mind. "He hurt me. He hurt me, so they both had to die." Images of his redheaded lover crossed through his mind and a wave of regret passed over him. He missed Axel so badly.

"If you had the chance, would you kill me?"

More tears came when the blonde felt the elastic band from his pants being slid down. "Yes. What the hell ... type of ... question is that?" Demyx bit his lip, jerking forward to escape the touch. He could handle any pain that Zexion threw at him to an extent, but this was the part he hated most. He couldn't stand the feeling of those fingers inching over his skin, the way his pants were slid down ever-so-slowly, torturing him longer than he could bare. He hated the fact that Zexion had requested him to always already be prepared for their sessions - no shirt, no underwear, just the standard-issue prison pants slipping from his hips. He hated what was coming next.

"Do you hate me for what I do to you?"

"Leave me alone! Just don't touch me! Leave me alone!" Demyx screamed at the top of his lungs, slamming his eyes shut, trying to move away from the defiling touch that was moving back up after slipping away the dirty material that had covered him. "Don't touch me!" Hands were on his hips once again, one finger moving up, closer, closer until finally he couldn't take the feeling

anymore. His shaking knees buckled and he fell to the floor, pulling his frail body closer to the wall with chalk-white hands gripping onto the bars. Fear coursed through him as the pie-pan that had seared through his skin clattered to the floor with a crash, some of the still-warm pie flying up, splattering the scene, some landing on his feet and back. His hips pressed into the wall and he nuzzled against the cold stone, begging it to take him and hide him away.

"How dare you, you petty little rat? I'll teach you to run away from me!"

"Don't touch me!" Demyx wished for nothing more than his voice to travel out into the hallways where surely someone would hear him, someone would be able to come save him. They had to be able to come save him! How could they not hear him? A strong hand laced through his hair, snapping his head back. This was it. He was going to die. Zexion was going to beat him to a bloody pulp for disobeying him. A cry of pain erupted from him as he tried to make as much noise as he could. But who would listen? When was there a night when someone wasn't screaming for one reason or another? Were they not all crazy in this hellhole? "I'll kill myself!" The blonde brought his teeth down as hard as he could on his tongue, remembering in the back of his mind all those shows he had watched where they put something in someone's mouth to keep them from biting off their tongue. Something told him that he could bleed to death if he did. He could taste the blood, feel the pain, but he didn't know how hard he would have to bite to get away from the periwinkle-haired monster.

In the milli-second of hesitation where he decided whether he had bit hard enough or to continue the dirty deed, Zexion wheeled him around, one hand yanking down on his bottom jaw, the other pulling up on the top. Demyx's eyes leaked more tears as pain exploded through his mouth. He would have been screaming from the pain in his back but only the edges of the circle of burnt skin could feel anything. Jaw nearly popping at the seams, Demyx thrashed, trying desperately to kick at his attacker but weeks without proper nourishment left him unable to land a hit. Hands still latched beside his head, Demyx fell limp in the elder's hold.

"Do not disobey me, Demyx." The words were hissed and the angered breath ran over his nose, making him flinch, trying to pull back. His tongue flicked over pampered fingertips, trying to push them out, still backing his head into the wall. The fingers refused to move as he gave up, the pain too great for him to handle. "Are you listening to me, Demyx?" When still Demyx didn't reply, Zexion slammed his head back, causing a muffled sob of pain. "I'll kill you, you son of a bitch."

Before Demyx could try to get the word "good" out of his mouth, the door slammed open and Zexion was screaming, releasing his mouth. Knowing it could only be a matter of seconds before the nightmare was on him again, eyes still firmly clamped shut, Demyx slammed his teeth down. More pain flooded through him but he was going to be free. The commotion around him meant nothing. It was just loud noises and strangers shouting. He had to kill himself before Zexion had the honour. A scream ripped through his lips when he felt hands on him again, prying open his bloody lips, shoving an object between his teeth. Zexion's shrieking was fading away and the blonde hoped beyond hope that it was because he was finally dying, finally releasing himself from the suffering. But he heard a stranger's voice yell somewhere close to his face. Seconds later there was a sting on the side of his neck and he felt nothing as he slipped into darkness.

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To Be Continued

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Sora

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His vision was blurred as he slowly drifted into consciousness, his pain dull as his body throbbed. Trying to speak, he found he couldn't due to the rubber rod he had fastened in his mouth. Panic shot through his immobilized body as all sorts of outcomes ran through his mind. Did he die? Did Zexion take him to some lab to be experimented on? Was he going to be tortured far worse here?

"Hey, sleepy-head. Jeez, you were passed out for like ... days!"

Demyx squeezed his eyes shut before opening them slowly, trying to locate the owner of the voice floating through the haze. Finally he spotted a brown-haired man beaming at him from the bed across from his. Since when were there beds across from him? Or on either side of him...? When had his small little window given him so much light?

The blonde shook his head, trying to get some feeling back in his body by getting his blood moving. He tried lifting his arms but groaned when he found them latched onto the bed frame. "Hey bud, don't try to move so much. You'll just rip out your IV." Demyx looked up, his vision finally picking up the bright cerulean orbs taking him in from the small distance there was between the two of them. Trying to speak, Demyx crinkled his nose when he found the object blocking his tongue from moving stopped any words he could try. "Don't worry about it, Demyx. You're gonna be fine. Do you want me to call the doctors in for you now?" A small spark of fear lit up the blonde and his eyes went wide. At first the thought of this stranger knowing his name unnerved him but then he realized that the boy had said doctors. Zexion was a doctor. Zexion was the last person that he wanted to see.

"Are you okay?"

"N-nnng. Nnng!" Demyx screwed his eyes shut, trying to scream through the object stopping him but his throat was still raw from his last nightmare with Zexion.

"Hey, wait, Demyx, careful, don't hurt yourself!" The stranger sat up straighter, leaning forward as best as he could while staying in his own restraints. A little buzzer sounded when his thumb connected to the pager in his hand and it wasn't long before three nurses in white uniforms came rushing in to a panicking Demyx.

"It's okay, sir. Please, try to calm down! There's no one here to hurt you! You're safe!"

The stranger in the bed opposite him squirmed to try and get a good look as two of the nurses held Demyx back against the mattress. There wasn't anywhere for him to go anyways. His wrists and ankles were attached to the metal around him, a strap ran over his belly and an IV was lodged into the top of his hand. But still he tried valiantly to thrash away from his captors, screaming as best as he could when he felt two pairs of hands holding him back.

"Demyx, please, calm down. I don't want to have to sedate you." The sound of a woman's voice stopped him cold. It had been so long since he had heard someone other than the periwinkle-haired tormenter. Forcing himself to relax, scared, child-like aquamarine orbs gazed up at the woman holding the needle in her hand like a threat. "Do you want to talk?" Demyx nodded slowly, sure that it was just a trick. Zexion would do things like this to him all the time. It was nothing new. "Promise not to bite your tongue again?" A puzzled look came over Demyx's face until he remembered the feeling of Zexion's fingers over him, being shoved into the wall, being so desperate that he had tried to end his life. Shivering with remembrance, the blonde slammed his

eyes shut, curling in on himself, shaking his head no. He took in a sharp gasp when he felt hands on his cheeks, digging at the straps there. "It's okay. They're helping you. You don't have to worry about Zexion ever again." Keeping his eyes shut, Demyx stopped fighting, the words reassuring him, if only slightly.

"He's gone? For good?" were the first words out of Demyx's mouth once the object was removed. He licked at the roof of his mouth, trying to rid himself of the feeling, no pulse of pain from his tongue. He was on too many pain medications for his back to feel something so small as his tongue.

"He was taken away to the state prison three hours from here this morning. You're safe, Demyx."

The blonde refused to believe it. He hadn't been safe for thirteen years. Ever since that first time ... that first time Axel ... "I'm not gonna be safe. Someone else'll just come get me and beat me ..."

The brunette opposite him smirked, putting on a large, reassuring smile.

"Don't worry. That's why I'm here. I'll help protect you! Name's Sora."

Demyx couldn't return the smile. "I don't believe it. I'm not going to believe it. Because if I believe it, ..." The blonde trailed off, not feeling like opening up to all these strangers. Instead he just closed his eyes, leaning his head back against his pillow. A pillow. That was a luxury he hadn't been allowed for far too long.

"Demyx, do you want to live?" The nurse beckoned the other two out of the room, staying by the foot of the blonde's bed. Aquamarine orbs cracked just a hair.

"We'll see."

Accepting that as the most straightforward answer she would be getting and a decent enough one to keep her charge out of danger, the nurse smiled, turning to give the brunette a stern look. Sora nodded with a smirked "I got it, I got it," before the woman bustled away, stopping at the doors to peer back once more.

"You're going to be safe here now, Demyx."

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"Soo? Are you gonna talk to me today? It's so boring when you don't talk, you know!" Demyx squeezed his eyes shut tighter, hoping he could just shut the brunette away. He didn't know how much longer he could listen to the fidgeting boy. "We can trade stories, ya know! That'd be cool, wouldn't it?"

Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. Trying to keep himself from yelling at his one companion, Demyx clenched his fingers shut. "Only if you promise that you'll be quiet for just half an hour. I don't know how much more of you I can take."

A giant smirk crossed the younger's unscarred face. "Riku said the exact same thing that ... that last night." Then a pout took over. "But he was joking. At least I think he was joking. We'll just say he was joking. But then there was this jerk-wad ... Demyx, are you gonna tell me your story if I tell you mine?" Demyx glanced at the hopeful boy, confused as to how he could change subjects so quickly. Deciding it would be better to attempt making friends with this boy than finding ways to make him upset, the blonde nodded, nearly curious to find out how someone else could be locked up in a place like this. "Well, me and Riku were friends since we were kids. We said we'd grow old together, be that old couple rocking in rocking chairs on the front deck of some little cottage on a lake somewhere. But ... But he didn't even get to say he loved me that one night."

Sora took a deep breath, clutching at the metal at his fingertips, being careful not to press the red button on the buzzer. "He had to go out for a walk. He said he just wanted to get outta the house for a bit. At first he didn't want me to go with him - I knew he was only doing it to get away from me - but he ended up letting me go with him." A shiver ran over the brunette boy and something told Demyx that the story was no longer being said for him to hear, but for the boy to get it out. "It was great. He decided to take me out for pizza and everything. But then this ... this asshole ... he came up to us in the middle of the street. We didn't even do anything that would make him mad. He just kinda wobbled there for a second and smiled like he'd lost his mind. I think he was drunk. He had to be. But Riku and me ... we were just walking... And he came up ... he grabbed Riku and ... I don't even know why but he shoved him up against the nearest building ... and he put a knife right against his throat." Sora tried to move his hand up to show where the weapon had been but he couldn't shake loose the bindings.

Demyx tapped his fingers against the bed frame. The caring side that he had been known for in his previous life was sniffing out the brunette that seemed to need nothing more than a good hug. It frustrated him that he couldn't comfort the boy that needed him but then he would come back to his painful reality and just want Sora to stop talking. He didn't want to hear this story.

"The guy shoved me away when I went to go get him off and I fell on the ground. Riku got ... got really pissed at him. He tried to get the guy off him but the dude was just too big. He said he just wanted Riku's money and then he would leave. But I opened my big fat mouth and told him to leave my boyfriend alone." The tears leaking into those cerulean orbs cut off the words in Sora's throat. He wasn't even looking at the blonde anymore. His desperate gaze searched around the room as if Riku was going to slip out from beneath one of the beds. "T-Turns out ... he hates us 'fags'. He threw ... he threw Riku down and ... and I couldn't do anything. I was ... I was stuck there ... I was scared ... I couldn't even save my best friend when ... when he was being killed. I couldn't ... I couldn't save him. I couldn't move. I just watched as he screamed ... I just sat there crying ... I couldn't ... Riku!" The boy snapped, thrashing where he sat, shoving his shoulders back against his mattress. A scream ripped through his lips and his fingers flailed, sending the emergency button dangling down until it nearly touched the floor. "Riku!" the brunette shrieked, hurting Demyx's ears and heart with its intensity.

"What's going on in here? Demyx, what did you say to him?"

Just as the blonde had hoped, nurses came running at the sound of the screaming, though he hadn't counted on it being himself that would get the blame. He shook his head when the head nurse came over to interrogate him, the two others going over to calm the brunette down. "I-I didn't .. He wanted ... he just wanted to tell me what happened to him ... How was I supposed to know he was gonna start screaming? His Riku's gone. I don't blame him for screaming." A pout creased Demyx's mouth and tears welled up in his eyes. "At least Riku actually loved him still."

"What?"

"Riku!" The brunette shrieked the name once more, causing the orderlies around to cringe, still trying to push the boy's shoulders back, a rubber rod in the hand of one that Demyx recognized to be one like the thing they had used to keep him from biting his tongue. The blonde could see the panic and horror in those wide-open, sightless blue orbs. He knew that feeling. Zexion had made that face appear so many times.

"Don't touch him! You're only making it worse! The last thing he needs right now is to be touched!" Demyx tried to pull his hands free, but the metal bindings continued to hold fast. "Leave him alone!" he sobbed pathetically, knowing there was nothing he could do. The head nurse turned back to look at him, a scowl on her lips.

"Since when are you his doctor?"

"Since Zexion hurt me! Can't you see how scared he is? Do you even know why he's in here?" Slamming his eyes shut from the scene, Demyx shook his head. He couldn't watch anymore. The boy he was to call his roommate was being tortured in this too-bright room and there was absolutely nothing he could do about it. A strange brotherly affection had started to grow towards the boy, so when he couldn't move to save him a fire burned through his body, setting his muscles on fire, thrashing as he was.

"Don't be absurd. Of course I know why he's here. He killed a man and fell off his rocker." The older woman gave him a superior look and he barred his teeth in a snarl.

"He watched his best friend be killed! Riku was his best friend, his boy friend! They were meant to grow old together! The dude he killed was probably the one that killed Riku!"

The struggling in the other bed had stopped, the screaming scaling down to first a soft whine and then nothing at all. For a moment, when Demyx dared to look at the younger again, he thought Sora had died. Then he took in the needle in one of the orderly's hand. They reported to the one in charge and Demyx slumped where he sat. Was that all life was going to be now? Just screaming and sedation? Would he scream like that when he was forced to talk about what he did to Axel?

"Tell him to press the call button when he wakes up. It's time to start his therapy."

"You're not allowed to hurt him!" Demyx bristled at the word therapy. That was supposedly what Zexion came to his room for. What that man did was far from therapy. If Sora had to go through that ...

"He'll have his therapy sessions with the man that saved you from that disgusting scum. He'll be in good hands."

Demyx glared up at the woman. "I'll know if he's hurt. If he does ... If he does get hurt ... bad things will happen."

The woman rolled her eyes; sure it was just the mental problems threatening her or her colleagues. "Get some rest, Demyx." And she was gone.

xXx

That first time, Sora came back unconscious, carted back to their room in a wheelchair. Demyx bristled, eyes searching for a reason behind it. One of the nurses noticed his mounting panic and threw a kind smile at him. "He went into one of his episodes. He's only sedated." The brunette boy was strapped back into his bed and Demyx whined, wanting those cerulean orbs to open so that Sora himself could say that nothing bad happened.

It seemed to take forever without any clocks around, but Sora slowly let his eyes lift open, a confused expression on his face. After blinking a few times, the boy pulled weakly at his wrist, trying to bring it up to wipe at his face. "Wha ... Oh ... Demyx ... Hi?"

"Did they hurt you, Sora?"

The confused look stayed on the brunette's face and he tilted his head to the side. "No? I don't think so... My mind's a lil' foggy right now though. And my throat kinda hurts. I think I was screaming again." Sora's voice was strained, supporting his theory. "I don't hurt though. I kinda feel ... sad. And tired. Sad and tired. Do you mind ... if I get some real sleep now, Demyx? Being drug-induced gives me nightmares."

Demyx had a million questions bumping around in his brain, but didn't deny the boy his rest. He

knew how hard it was to sleep in this crazy world. You had to take advantage of every second you got. "I'll save you if you start to have a bad dream, okay?" The brunette only smiled, letting his eyes drift shut once more.

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"Can you leave me free, please? I've been locked up here long enough. And aren't I getting better? I didn't scream in therapy today. I can say Riku without freaking out. Please?" Sora pleaded with the nurse walking him forward with handcuffs on his wrists. "We weren't really supposed to be handcuffed in our cell anyways. This kinda counts as a cell. I know it's a hospital room, but I don't wanna be stuck in bed anymore. And I don't want this stupid catheter in anymore. Do you know what it's like being attached to a pee-bag because your nurses think you're too dangerous to run loose? I haven't shown any signs of being dangerous, have I? Sure, I'm crazy, but I'm not gonna hurt anyone." The brunette turned to his blonde cell-mate, cerulean orbs holding a hidden glint of mischief Demyx had never seen from the younger before. "You wanna be free too, don't you, Demyx? That would help your back heal a bit instead of laying on it all the time."

The blonde started, not knowing the younger had ever been awake when it had been time to change his bandages but he nodded none-the-less. Oh what it would be like to be able to move freely again. His wrists had rashes from rubbing against the metal so often and he thought that he would lose all feeling in his legs if he didn't walk around soon. He'd already been in the room for two weeks and he was getting bored, sitting there day in and day out. He almost missed his old cell. Sure, Zexion would hurt him, but at least he'd been able to move. Being hurt wasn't something he was new to so they should let him walk it off. It helped to move when he hurt. "Yeah, I wanna be free too. We're friends now. We're not gonna kill each other."

"I would have to ask the head nurse and she's busy today. Please, bring it up with her the next time you see her."

"But ma'am," Sora whined, turning his glistening cerulean orbs on his host. Demyx tried to hide his smirk, wondering how anyone could possibly resist that look. "We're good kids, really! Why don't you go ask her boss or something? I'm sure that you can find a way to let us go."

"Please?" Demyx added, just to be on the safe side. The woman blushed, continuing to guide the brunette to his bed. "We promise we'll be good." The blonde didn't even know where the request was coming from himself and he was almost scared that Sora would take some sort of advantage over him, but right then it didn't matter. He wanted to be in control again. He hadn't been in control since he had killed Axel.

Sora was seated on his bed, but only one hand was secured, the woman backing away when she heard the click. The boys gave her a confused look but she gave them a weak, reassuring smile. "I'm going to go get the head doctor. I'll make sure he says yes."

When the woman was gone, Demyx looked down at his bindings, wondering if he was really going to be released from them. "What made you get that idea, Sora? I didn't think you were the rebellious type." Sora reached over, rubbing at his chained wrist with his free one, shrugging a bit.

"I forgot what it was like to walk around without someone holding onto me. The doc let me today in therapy. I think he's gonna regret it now, giving me ideas, but I just ... I like the feeling, ya know? Makes me feel a little more sane."

Another thought struck the blonde. He'd been able to move around in his old cell, and the last time he checked, where the duo resided now was only temporary, until the burn on his back was able to go without bandaging. "Why're you in here?"

The brunette's eyes widened, mildly shocked by the question. "I ... They didn't trust me in the cell I was in. Well, they didn't trust the guy in the cell beside mine, since we were both almost okay, almost good enough to be put into the regular system, so we already had the regular cells, the ones that connected by the bars on the side... You've been asleep whenever I would get a bath, weren't you? Or at least pretending to be?" Demyx thought back and nodded, realizing that he hadn't seen the brunette without clothing, though apparently he himself had been seen. "Well, he somehow managed to sneak a fork back to his cell. Talked me into going over to the bars to see something. It's amazing how deep those things can go."

Some part of Demyx doubted the tale he was told, but he hardly cared by that point. He didn't even have time to formulate another question as the nurse came back, being followed by an elderly man that Demyx recognized all too well. Whole body tensing as the man walked into the room, Demyx felt his breath coming in short gasps. The last time he had seen that smiling face, Zexion's hand was on his arm. That same, fake smile was on his lips, the one he wore to let his patients think he cared. "Sora, I hear you've requested to be released from your bed. Is that because of our session today?"

An innocent look crossed the brunette's features as he turned his gaze from the elder man to the floor. "Yes sir. You don't have any idea how good it felt to finally be able to walk around again! I think it would really help my mind. If I can walk around, I can let out my insanity, right? Like, I can move to let off some steam?"

The grey-haired man stroked at his chin, pondering the request. "What do you think, Demyx?" The blonde stiffened, his eyes widening before clamping shut.

"Asshole! You can't just call me by name like you weren't the one that left me there! You left me with him! You left me!" Demyx's heart was thudding in his chest, tears sparking in his eyes as he remembered the defilement that the man standing at the foot of his bed could have prevented. If that man had of stayed, he would still have feeling in the majority of his back. "Why'd you leave?" His voice shaking with his fear, Demyx backed as far away as he could when the man moved towards him. The fake smile disappeared from his lips, suddenly becoming very serious at the prospect of having one of his patients willing to jump at him.

"What do you mean, Demyx? When did I leave?"

The blonde balled his fists, begging the man to stay away from him when he couldn't even defend himself. The doctor respected Demyx's wishes, keeping his fingers on his chin. "You said ... you said you were going home... That you were done for the night ... You could have saved me but ... but you left." Comprehension dawned on the old man's face.

"Ah, I see. You were distraught when Zexion was taken away, weren't you? Who do you think it was that stopped you from killing yourself?"

Demyx's horrified eyes ran over the gray-haired man, his chest tightening. He felt like he was going to be sick, his tongue aching with just the thought of being bitten into once more. "Y-You ... You did that? H-How did you ... how did you know what was going on?"

A soft, apologetic smile appeared on the man's lips and Demyx wanted to claw it off. He didn't want pity. He wanted answers. "I went back into the adjoining room. There were police there waiting fo-"

"You were watching?" Demyx hissed, his voice laced with venom, suddenly feeling very exposed. Someone had been watching him in his weakest moment.

"Let me finish, Demyx. We had a suspicion that something was going on between the two of you

but we needed some sort of evidence. We had to catch Zexion in the act, catch him on video." Demyx's blood ran cold. Strangers had seen him at his weakest moment? It had been taped? Shivers of fury and embarrassment shot through the blonde and he shut his eyes, hanging his head. "We were going to stop the situation before anything drastic happened, like pure penetration or if either of you threatened your life, Demyx."

"Did burning my back not count? Did making me scream bloody murder not count? How did you know he was even going to do anything like that? How many times have you watched?" Tears of frustration and pure, raw emotion slipped down Demyx's cheeks as he fought against the metal holding him still, the strap around his stomach pushing the air from his lungs. His world was spinning and he hoped he would pass out soon so that he wouldn't have to feel the betrayal ripping at his heart. He had to move. He had to get up and move. He needed to punch something, to hurt something. Images of Axel - bleeding and broken, his head lolling - flashed through his mind and he shot his fingers open, needing to reach the man he had loved. The dead body of a blue-haired stranger slumped down over the still-visible bed and his nerves bristled at the sight, knowing he was the one that had killed the sinner.

"Demyx, please, calm down. I know it must be difficult to process all of this information, but please, restrain yourself."

"How many times did you watch?"

The man sighed, knowing he would get nowhere with the blonde unless he answered the questions being shrieked at him. Sora was cowering with the nurse over by his bed, using her as a shield to save him from Demyx's rage. "I was concerned for your well-being, Demyx. That was the second time I had witnessed Zexion's evil deeds."

"How could you live with yourself?" Demyx's shriek had died down to a pained hiss, his aquamarine orbs darkened as he glared up at the man that was supposedly a saviour. "How could you live with yourself after watching?"

"I am one man. Without any proof on the matter, my word means nothing. I couldn't very well go up to the police and say that my apprentice was raping one of my criminally insane patients." Demyx cowered away at the word that described perfectly what had happened to him, time after time. "They wouldn't have cared, Demyx. I had to have evidence. Even then, it was difficult to get them to agree. My patients mean nothing to the authorities. You are nothing more than scum beneath their feet, lowest of the low. We live in a time where mental illness is frowned upon. You should know this."

He did. Demyx knew very well that he was frowned upon. No one accepted him. His parents didn't. His brother didn't. His best friends didn't. Even Axel didn't. They all sifted out of his life, one by one, leaving him alone with nothing more than demons and pain and suffering. Axel had stayed with him the longest, but even the redhead only used him. He wasn't normal to other people. He was someone to be stepped on, walked over. That's why his family disowned him - he was gay. No one wanted a gay son or brother. His friends couldn't handle the fact that he chose to stay with Axel. Axel ... Axel told him how worthless he was, how he had no one but the redhead, that every other person in the world would do nothing but use and abuse him. That's why he took the pain and suffering Axel caused. He deserved it. He deserved every second of the punishment he received.

"I ... I deserved it. I ... I displeased Zexion ... I couldn't ... I couldn't do ... anything to please him. I was nothing. So ... so he punished me. He ... he punished me for ... for everything ... I couldn't .. I couldn't ..." Demyx couldn't continue. His voice was giving out. His vision was swimming. The world was spinning. His stomach was churning. He was going to throw up. He was going to pass out.

He was insane.

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To be Continued

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Confessions

"Turn it off." Demyx had his eyes shut tight, refusing to look at the television screen sitting on the desk in front of him.

"He hurt me. He hurt me so they both had to die."

"If you had the chance, would you kill me too?"

"Yes."

Demyx fought against the handcuffs holding his hands in his lap, leaning forward in an attempt at reaching his ears. He couldn't take the sound of his defilement any longer. "Turn it off! Turn it off, turn it off, turn it off!" The blonde rocked in the chair he sat in. His whole body convulsed, not needing to hear the torture over again. He could still feel how close he had come to being ripped open again. Silence fell from the machine and the elder man behind the desk leaned forward, propping himself up on his elbows. "How the hell is that supposed to help? Don't you think hearing it over and over in my head isn't enough? Don't you know I still feel his hands all over me every time someone even just brushes against me? How the hell is that supposed to help me?"

The older man smiled. "I wanted to see how far into the video you could make it. It actually taught me a great deal. You made me stop it when you actually stood up for yourself. Are you ashamed you did? Is it against what you normally do?"

Demyx's head swam. It wasn't because he stood up for himself that he wanted it stopped. He knew what was coming next. He knew that the worst of the screaming wasn't over and knew he wouldn't be able to take it. "Yeah.. You've seen me ... how often ... how often am I able to stand up for myself without getting the snot beat out of me. I guess ... even just hearing me rebel against someone ... I feel like I'm going to get punished, even if I was already punished for it." Taking in a few steadying breaths, Demyx rubbed at his eyes before sitting back up to face the doctor that hadn't left him after all. He wondered if the old man knew how hard it was for him to talk about the slate-haired monster, about punishment, about his former life. But he wasn't just talking about Axel's punishment. Someone had always punished him for speaking his mind; be it his parents, his teachers, his friends or his husband. "I'm ... I'm worthless ... so I don't get a say in anything. I really shouldn't even be wasting your time. I'm sorry, sir."

"Demyx ... do you think you're insane?" Taken aback by the sudden change of subject, Demyx tilted his head to the side, an innocent ghost of a smile on his lips.

"I'm here, aren't I? That means I'm off my rocker. I don't think so, but society does and what society says, I have to do. It's probably safer in here for me anyways."

"Would you want to head back out into the working world?"

Demyx hadn't ever really thought about it before. Would he be able to live out there? Was he really living here? "It doesn't really matter, does it? I've killed people. I'm gonna spend my life in prison, no matter how much they deserved to die." The doctor jumped at the opportunity to talk about the reasons behind Demyx's imprisonment.

"Why'd they deserve it, Demyx? What did they do to make you want to kill them?"

Refusing to look at the man, the blonde spoke into his lap. "I guess ... I guess I shouldn't have ... I shouldn't have killed the other person. He might not have known I was even in the picture. I doubt

... I doubt Axel would tell him something like 'Oh, I'm married, so we really shouldn't have sex in my bed where my husband could walk in on us at any moment since he's only out to get the groceries down the street.' Then again, I doubt that Axel would have even really cared about me. I .. I just ... I ... I-" Demyx found himself choked up. He didn't feel any regret, so then why was he on the verge of crying?

"Will you tell me how it happened?"

Demyx shook his head. He couldn't. He still could hardly believe that the sin had been committed. But Axel's pleading voice sent shivers through his body as it echoed through his mind. 'Please, Demyx, don't do this...' 'Just shoot me! I give up! Just shoot me! Demyx!' 'You made him come into this house! If you had of been better for me, none of this would have happened.'"It's always my fault..." 'your fault' Demyx forced his hands up over his ears, ignoring the sting of the chain biting into his face as he pulled the handcuffs tight. He had to block out Axel's voice. It was ringing in his ears and making him feel sick. "I ... I didn't want anyone to die! I swear I didn't! It's just ... I .."

"It's alright, Demyx. If you can't talk about it right now, we can start off right here on our next session."

"I don't ever wanna talk about it."

That kind, fatherly smile was back on the man's face and Demyx shivered. He didn't want to trust the kindness, knowing that the man was just trying to rope him in to make hurting him even easier. "Why don't we swap stories, Demyx?"

"No." He wasn't interested. He knew what was going to happen. Pulling his hands away from his ears, the blonde leaned back in his chair. "I don't want to talk anymore."

"Are you still mad at me?"

"I'll always be mad at you." Demyx moved to cross his arms across his chest, cringing when they couldn't even cross half the span. Instead he laced his long musician's fingers together, placing them delicately in his lap.

"Mad enough to kill me?"

Aquamarine orbs were rolled in annoyance, landing on the ceiling. "Just because I get mad at someone doesn't mean I'm gonna kill them. Axel would beat the crap outta me and Zexion ... well ... yeah ..." Demyx trailed off, feeling his chest constrict with the mention of Axel's cruelty. "But it doesn't matter. I don't wanna kill you. I'm just mad at you."

"Alright. What can I do to make it up to you? I don't like it when people are mad at me. I do everything in my power to make it better. What do you want, Demyx?"

The blonde looked down at his wrists. "I don't wanna be tied up like a dog with rabies anymore. I'm not dangerous. I won't hurt anyone. I'm really not a bad person. Just get rid of these." Leaning forward, Demyx placed his hands on the doctor's desk, only inches from the man's elbow. "Release me. It'd make me feel more sane because have you ever had to be locked up, at the full mercy of someone else? It's ... It's horrifying." Giving the man his most serious face, the blonde pleaded with his eyes to be released, knowing the doctor had the key somewhere in his desk.

"Will it make you trust me if I let you go?"

Demyx pondered his answer for a second before nodding. "Yeah, I'd trust you a bit more." Keeping his dull brown eyes on the blonde, the older man brought back his smile, reaching down

into his desk, pulling up a small key that looked just big enough to fit the lock of his handcuffs.

"We're going to end our session on this note, okay?"

Demyx's brows crinkled. "What, with you teasing me like this? You're only gonna show me that there is a key, not that it's gonna be used?" Weathered hands gripped around Demyx's, making the blonde cringe, trying to pull them away, the only thing keeping him still was the prospect of the key he could feel on his skin. "C-Could you ... please not touch me? It makes me think of Zexion."

"That's the point. You're going to see that not everyone is out to get you. You feel the key there, don't you? I'll walk you back to your room with the key touching your skin somewhere. That way you have some safety to cling to, alright? And if it gets too overwhelming at any time, you can ask me to take my hands away. But I'll only take them away if you ask, alright? If you can make it back to the room, you get to have the rest of the day out of your restrictions."

Demyx closed his eyes, steadying his breath, determined to be free, if only for a day. "But what about Sora?" He was nudged into standing, his eyes still closed when he felt the doctor come around the desk to stand behind him.

"Sora hasn't shown he's worthy of being released. You have." Demyx took in a sharp breath when he felt the cold metal of the key press against the bare upper-half of his arm, his hands tensing as they were brought up to his chest, thoughts of Zexion flooding his mind.

"Not Zexion, not Zexion, not Zexion. You're fine," he hissed under his breath, letting the air out slowly. "Alright. Alright, I'm good. I ... I can do this."

Demyx only faltered twice on the short walk back to his shared room, feeling the key leave his skin for a fraction of a second the first time, being scared out of his wits by an opening elevator the second. The doctor beamed at him when he stepped back into his room to join the brunette.

"Wonderful, Demyx! Absolutely brilliant! I didn't think that you had so much self-control. Not meant to be offensive, just think of the people I tend to work with. I think that definitely deserves at least a full day of being out of your cuffs! But you've got to promise you'll leave the orderlies alone when they're in here. But tomorrow we'll work on hearing your story, alright?"

Demyx jumped when he felt the key being removed from his skin, but beamed when he watched the man stand in front of him, feeling his handcuffs slipping from his wrists. His arms moved sluggishly, being careful not to move too fast in case there was an invisible tether attached to them. When they were spread as far as they could go, Demyx let out a happy little laugh, squealing slightly, drawing his arms back in as he laughed more. He was free. He was finally free! After so long of being a captive to other's intentions, Demyx could make some decisions of his own.

"Hey! No fair! That's not fair at all! Why does he get outta his handcuffs? Why's he so much better than me?" Sora fought the metal still holding him to his bed, yanking with all his strength to achieve what Demyx had. The blonde stretched his arms once more, trying hard to suppress his giddiness so as not to rub it in the brunette's face.

"You didn't earn it, Sora. You'll be allowed to be free when I feel you've earned it."

"Ugh!" Sora cried out in frustration, shoving himself back against his mattress. "How do I do that?"

"Show that I can trust you."

Demyx moved a step away from the doctor, fearing that he was just playing some sort of joke on

him. He went and sat on the edge of the nearest bed, a hand on either side of his legs to support himself. He didn't want to look down to see his wrist scarred up due to the metal, but he couldn't resist. The skin was raw, but he had expected much worse. A small amount of trust for the elder man flooded into him, knowing that his wrists had been saved permanent damage due to the doctor's kindness. The old man stepped forward, placing his hand on Demyx's shoulder, trusting him not to lash out from fear. Demyx could sense that and forced himself to stay still even though it meant his body began to shake from the effort.

"How much are you going to tell me tomorrow, Demyx?"

Biting his lower lip as he thought about it, Demyx looked up at the ceiling. After a moment, he gave the man a miniature smile. "As much as I can trust you with."

"Do you think that will be much?"

The smile grew. "Depends on how much I like being free, doesn't it?"

The man chuckled, smiling as he removed his hand. "I guess that's the best answer I can hope from you?" The blonde nodded. "Alright. I'll come to get you tomorrow, okay?" Another nod and the man departed.

"Not far! I was a good boy! I should get to be out too."

Demyx ignored the boy, walking around the room to get used to his legs being able to move. That night he had the best sleep he'd had in ages, able to block out Sora's moaning about how unfair the perfectly fair treatment was.

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"Start with when you were a kid, Demyx."

The blonde pouted, gazing down at his newly-handcuffed wrists. "Do I gotta?"

The doctor smiled, a soft laugh escaping him at the child-like innocence on Demyx's features. "Do you want to be handcuff-free again?"

Pondering this, Demyx's pout increased when he nodded his head. "Yeah, I guess. But you trust me, don't you? So, I should be allowed to talk about what I can without my hands being tied, right? Since you trust me?" Demyx was amazed at how happy a decent night's sleep could make him. Even the prospect of telling his deepest, darkest secrets to a man whose name he had yet to learn didn't faze him.

"Sorry, Demyx, but I need some sort of leverage to get you to talk. If you're good, they'll come off."

Demyx sighed, but didn't argue the point any farther. "Fine. Though there's not all that much to tell... Not about when I was little, anyways. It was all fine until I told my parents about my sexuality. I guess ... I guess I had friends when I was a kid. They didn't do anything bad to me. I would get picked on a little, but I mean what kid isn't picked on at least a bit?" Demyx lowered his eyes to his hands, concentrating on the metal that could only be released by telling his story. "As I got older, the kids kept calling me a fag. By High School, I had admitted to my parents what I was. Dad thought he could punish it outta me, Mom cried a bit then wouldn't look at me in the face ... ever. I wasn't .. I wasn't all that close to my parents anyways ... so I guess that didn't bug me too bad. But my bro was cool with it, and that's what mattered the most. The most he did was throw me down on the couch, all happy, saying 'I knew it! I knew my little bro was a faggot!' I think he was okay with it... We'll ... We'll just say he was okay, okay?" Demyx smiled at the

memory. He had laughed then with his brother. "We got along for a while after that still ... but then ..."

The elder man waited patiently with hands folded over his desk, smiling encouragingly at the blonde. Demyx didn't know how much he wanted to say. This doctor was the first one who hadn't cringed away at least a little when he admitted to being gay. But then again, why would he react badly? Faggotry seemed to run rampant in the halls of the Mental Institute.

"So would you say you had a happy childhood? Before you told your parents your secret, you had a happy life?"

Demyx thought before nodding. "Yeah, I would say it was happy. Even after, I was still pretty happy."

"You weren't neglected or anything? Provided with food, water, a warm place to sleep?" Another nod from the blonde and the doctor 'hmm'ed. "Did you always feel safe? Were you comfortable being in your house?"

"Well ... I ..." A quick peek was chanced at the elder man. "I was ... When I was little? I ... I was definitely safer when I was little. Dad would get mad sometimes, but it wasn't that bad. I got beat every once in a while, but it was only if I did something wrong ... Even then, it wasn't too bad. He did it to Cloud too, and Cloud said that his friends got treated the same way sometimes, just not as much. Oldschool, ya know?"

"When did you start to feel unsafe?"

Axel ... "After I told my parents ... that I had a boyfriend. So, that was when I was ... thirteen, I think. Yeah, Cloud was just graduating and finding a place with his girlfriend, so, thirteen. But it wasn't ... it wasn't 'Oh my god, I'm gonna die' unsafe. It was more ... I dunno, like 'what if Dad finds out I snuck out to see Setzer'. I wasn't scared I was gonna get killed, because I knew they still cared about me, no matter what it seemed like ... But I was scared I was disappointing them. No, I knew I was disappointing them ... but you can't change what you like, right? That's the way I looked at it. I ... I didn't ... I didn't want to lie to myself."

"That's a good way to look at things, Demyx. Be true to yourself above all else. What about this Setzer fellow? He was the one you were in your first relationship with? Tell me about that?"

"Setzer ... God, Setzer was ... He was somethin' else, all right. He didn't really want it to get out that we were together. He was really popular with the girls, I guess. He was big on the Struggle tournaments at school. Always the champion. But I definitely liked the thought of having him a lot more than actually being with him." Demyx brought his arms up, resting his wrists against the back of his head, arching his back with a crack. "He was a dick." A pout crossed the blonde's face as he looked up at the gray-haired man behind the desk. "I'm not that great when it comes to relationships. But at least I was smart enough to dump him when he wanted to take advantage of me after he won one of his tournaments."

"You seem like you were a very smart boy. I'm sure you still are. But I'm really sorry, our time for this session is up, if you want to take a break here. We can start off again tomorrow, if you would like."

"It's ... so weird ..." Demyx got unsteadily to his feet, a little light-headed from trying to call up so much about his past and having sat in that hard chair for a lot longer than he would have pleased. He didn't make any sudden movements, knowing that those warranted punishment - or at least they used to. "Talking about ... about what it was like to be me. It's ... not that important, is it? I'm not that importa-ah, oh god." Bringing his hands up, Demyx rubbed at the right side of his face as

the cold key was pressed higher up on his left arm than it had been the day prior. "I watched it coming and it still made my stomach flip over a hundred times to feel something touch me. I'm sorry."

"You've got no reason to apologize, Demyx. You are important and I'm always here to listen to you."

"Even though you're kicking me out of your office," Demyx joked, sending a smirk back at the doctor to prove it. The man played along but Demyx knew his words were true.

"I only did it because I don't think you're quite ready enough to tell me about any more of your relationships. Tell the nurses that you get two days of freedom, alright?"

The blonde pursed his lips in thought. "That means no session tomorrow though, doesn't it? Even though you just said ..."

"I'm sorry Demyx. But-" The man moved his left hand out in front of the blonde, exposing the wedding-band there. "Forty years ago tomorrow I married my wife. I don't think she'd be very pleased if I didn't spend the day with her. Just think, two whole days without the cuffs."

"I suppose you're right. Tell her that I'm happy that things worked out for you guys." Demyx glanced down at his own hand, seeing the indent his own ring had made after all those years. He beamed, hiding his sorrow. "I'm really happy. But I'll only not be mad if you bring me in some anniversary cake, okay?"

"Deal. Alright, now, you be good tomorrow, or you won't be getting any cake."

"I'll be good."

The metal clicked and Demyx separated his hands, watching them move in different arcs, heading back over to his bed, glad that Sora was asleep in his own. He didn't know the younger had been sedated after screaming for the past ten minutes.

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To Be Continued

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Axel

"You should ... come sit with me." Sora's voice was a rasping croak from across the room, Demyx leaning against the wall beside the radio that he'd requested. The brunette could hardly be heard over the music but Demyx managed, snapping his aqua eyes up, smiling at the boy. He did what was suggested, moving over to the end of the younger's bed, a smile on his lips as he moved his hips to the beat of the song playing on the station he had found.

"Why? And what's up with that voice? You okay?"

The brunette shook his head, looking up at the blonde with tired, cerulean eyes. "I ... I miss Riku. And I want you to ... to come closer ... so I don't ... don't have to miss him." Demyx's chest tightened and he moved around to sit by the younger's legs, placing a nervous hand down on the bed. Cringing at the touch, Demyx forced his hand to stay there. He was the one in control. He had nothing to fear.

The elder just guessed that Riku had been killed in the robbery and Sora had somehow managed to kill the killer. He didn't want to push the subject though. He didn't want Sora having another emotional breakdown. "It'll be okay. I'm here for you. Whatever you need, I'm here."

"I need to be free... What are the chances that ... you could put in a good word with the ... doc for me?" Demyx pursed his lips, drawing his features up into a thinking face. He still didn't trust Sora in the slightest. The last thing he wanted was to be defenceless in a room with someone he didn't trust. He trusted the doctor and the doctor trusted him, but even the old man sounded like he didn't trust Sora. He knew he wasn't getting the whole story from the brunette. Did he really want a complete stranger that was known to be dangerous loose in a room with him? But did he have the nerve to tell him no?

"I'll ... see what I can do." Demyx couldn't sit there anymore. He had to move. A sinister air slithered at him from the brunette's direction. His breath caught in his throat as he moved farther away, as far as he could manage, sitting down beside the radio and turning it up, pretending that he couldn't hear the boy calling to him.

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"Can you tell me something, doc?" Demyx worked a piece of chocolate anniversary cake onto his fork, being as careful as he could in getting it up to his mouth. The older man sat there with his smile and fingers laced on the desk.

"What is it you want to know?"

"Well ... Sora ... Sora said he wanted to ... not be tied there anymore. He said ... he wanted me to ask you if you ... would be able to let him go. But ... But I dunno. I trust you now somehow. I think you'd know what's best, but ... there's something ... there's just something not quite right ... in his mind, right? I mean .. I dunno ..." Demyx set down his fork, manoeuvring his hands to take up the glass of milk in front of him. It was the first time he'd had non-processed food in months. At first he had been reluctant, saying he'd only been joking during the last session, but the doctor had persisted and he gorged himself. "Tell me, do you, in your professional opinion, think it's okay for him to be released?"

The older man lost his grin, a serious look taking over. Demyx brought the fork to his mouth again, needing the sweetness to get over the weight of the question he had just asked, his eyes focused on the plate in his hand. Was he just being paranoid? Was he wrongfully accusing the

brunette? Was he sleeping in the same room as someone that had completely lost his mind? Was he even safe? "You don't trust him?" Demyx shook his head.

"He seems like a nice guy, but I dunno, it's just that ... he's ... too good. He's too friendly. Like ... I dunno how to explain it. It's stupid."

"It's not stupid, Demyx. It shows me that you can still judge people. Sora is a very dangerous man. Most of the people here are. There are a few exceptions, like yourself, but the majority would never be allowed to be freed."

Demyx gripped his utensil tighter, shocked fear coursing through him. He'd been right? "What'd he do that makes him so bad? I thought that he just killed someone. He didn't do it as bad as me, did he? I ... I hardly knew who Axel was in the end. I didn't - ..." Demyx didn't want to talk about Axel. He was there to talk about Sora.

"I can't discuss other patients with you, Demyx. I'm sorry."

"But I kinda ... have a right to know, don't I? I mean ... I'm sorry, I shouldn't press it. I was just thinkin' that it would be safer for me to know who I was really rooming with, right? At least just tell me if he knifed someone in their sleep or something, okay? Or ... I dunno... Never mind. I shouldn't ... I can't ask you to tell me. That's horrible of me. I'm sorry."

Concern lined the elder man's face and he pursed his lips in thought, wiggling them back and forth, burning a hole in his desk with his fiery gaze as he pondered what to say next. "I will tell you a little bit more. And after I do, it will be entirely up to you whether you think he should be let loose, okay?" Demyx nodded. "Unlike you, Sora wasn't originally classified 'mentally unstable'. The courts just thought he was righting wrongs and sentenced him to a few years of prison. But when he was there, since the attack was still fresh in his mind, he didn't trust anyone. He attacked more than one of his cell-mates. When he was alone, he would scream out for Riku. He was a real handful. Of course he's gotten a lot better since coming here, but sitting with him here in therapy, I would never let him have the freedom you do. I've seen him when he's gained control of something. He's a smart boy, Demyx. He's a very smart boy."

The blonde couldn't eat any more. He felt sick to his stomach. When was someone going to tell him that the one that shared his room could hurt him if they ever came in contact? "Then ... I'm not ready for him to be ... I don't want him loose. But ... why ... Why's he in the same room as me? There's a few beds, so it ... it holds more than the two of us, doesn't it? I'm in the sick-patient room, aren't I? Well, injured, I guess. Since my back, right? Since I've still got the bandages on my back, I'm in a special room? What about Sora?"

The old man leaned down, rubbing at his temples. "Sora ... oh Sora. He's never really been in one of the cells here. Any reference he makes is to the ones at the prison. He came here with three shattered ribs. Poor boy. Though the officers tell me it's his own fault. He started a fight with someone three times his size."

"He ... He misses Riku. He misses Riku and just wants ... wants to be with him again. He wants to be happy." Demyx placed his hands in his lap, sadness overwhelming him. He knew what it felt like to lose someone he loved - even if he was the one that caused the loved one to be lost. "I ... I want to go home. I want to ... I want to see Axel again... I miss Cloud. I haven't ... I haven't seen Cloud in ... in years. I want to be happy too."

"You'll be happy again someday."

"I ... I'm happy here, but I'm not ...happy happy. I'm scared here. I'm scared anywhere, but I'm scared here. This room ... it's the only place I kinda feel safe ... because you're here to save me,

aren't you? God sent you down to wash away my sins, right? But ... Zexion's right. God abandoned me. He abandoned me a long, long time ago. Didn't he, doc?"

The old man watched the blonde place his elbows on his knees, covering his eyes with his shackled hands. "Sora can't be let loose yet, but I wanna go back to bed. I'm tired. I don't wanna talk today. Lock me up. I'm being uncooperative. I don't mean to, I just ... I can't. Tomorrow I will, but ... today ... today I just can't. Thank you ... for the cake. It was delicious. It felt ... really good to ... have real food again."

"You've behaved today. Ours can't just be a take-take relationship. You shouldn't have to be the one that tells me everything. We can't be friends unless it's a two way street." Aquamarine orbs peeked at the man through spindly fingers. "You've still behaved, you've still earned your freedom. Do you want it today?"

It took the blonde a moment to think about it, but he nodded. "Yeah. Yeah, I don't like being locked up. Being locked up means I have nowhere else to look but at Sora. At least when I'm free I can hide a bit."

"That's what you do when you go over and listen to the radio?" The older man stood up when Demyx nodded once more. He held out the key and Demyx chanced a smile. Maybe he really could have some sort of relationship with someone. He trusted this man more than he had ever trusted anyone before. Maybe they could be friends after all.

Or not. Demyx gasped, crying out slightly when he felt the cold metal press up against his neck. Panic was evident in his eyes as fear rocked through him, chasing after the memories of Axel's hands on his throat, squeezing the life out of him. "Demyx, do you trust me?"

"Y-Ye- ... Yeah... B-But .. Axel ..."

"Did he strangle you?"

"Y-Yes."

The key didn't move. "I'm not Axel. My hand isn't touching you. It's not going to touch you. It's only the key. The key to your freedom. It's not going to hurt you. No one is going to hurt you, Demyx. Do you trust me?"

The blonde clenched his fists, fighting back the panic attack that wanted to rip through him. His breathing came in harsh gasps, but he had to control it. He was hurting the one man he trusted. "I do. I do trust you! But it's hard."

"I know, Demyx. I know." The key slid down his neck to rest on his shoulder. Tears were in those aquamarine orbs as he felt the fear being swallowed up by despair. All he wanted to do was crouch down into a ball and hide away, his hands up over his head in some weak defence that meant all. But he didn't, couldn't, wouldn't.

"I'm not weak! I can take it! I've gone through a lot more than a key on my neck. I've had my neck nearly broken. I think I can handle a key."

"Tomorrow, perhaps. It's still too early right now."

Demyx didn't argue farther, hanging his head as he walked back to his room.

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"You feel up to it? Are you sure?"

"I don't care if I'm up to it or not. I have to tell you about Axel." Demyx ran his fingers through his hair, attempting to emotionally prepare himself. "I met Axel in high school. He was awesome and a charmer and seemed to like me. By this point, my parents hated me and my brother was gone. But Axel was ... amazing. Everyone in school knew who he was. That meant that when we started to get to know each other, everyone ended up knowing who I was. Or at least a bit about who I was. I heard 'Hey, it's that kid that's with Axel all the time now' so many times I just wanted to tell them all my name. But I didn't. It didn't matter. Axel was amazing. And I loved him. I really did. And he loved me too. At least in the beginning.

"We went to prom, headed off to college, had life all planned out. But ... after a while ... I realized that I hadn't seen any of my friends for a really long time. Then one day he came home really pissed and he just ... he just ... he grabbed me and shoved me back against the counter. I didn't know what was going on. He shoved me into it and slammed my wrists back and crashed my head up against the wall. It was the first time he'd ever hurt me. He was screaming ... screaming so loud ... so mad. Apparently I'd left my shoes right in the doorway when I came in last. And he brought one hand up to hold my shoulder while the other punched my cheek. My head spun and I thought it was gonna snap right off. I thought I was gonna fall down or pass out or something since it hurt so bad but ... but he was ... was holding me up. It was .. so scary. I tried to hold him off, but he just threw me to the ground. I couldn't help but cry. I was horrified. He just ... he threw me like I was nothing. He didn't even think twice."

Demyx shook his head, his eyes bulging, remembering the shock of the moment. His hands washed up over his face, resting on his cheek for a second, feeling the pain of the impact. "Axel ... stood over me ... He kinda ... Kinda looked sad, but he was ... he was still really mad. I'm sure that me crying on the floor just made him madder. But then he just kinda stopped, his face went blank like someone slapped him and he just kinda stood there for a minute. Then he put his hand out and ... and offered to help me up.

"I was scared he was gonna hurt me again if I didn't ... so I took it. He pulled me up and all I can remember was him holding me still while I cried. I cried so much. And I was bleeding all over the place. Talk about hurt. But he hugged me and whispered that he was sorry and rubbed my head, and just kept apologizing. He said something about work, that it had been a 'shitty-ass' day. But what he told me didn't sound that bad. Not enough to beat up the one you're supposed to love forever. We'd already been married about a year by then. But he held me until I stopped crying, then he backed up, maybe so he could look at how bad he hurt me, maybe feel a bit bad about it. But I couldn't look at him. He tried kissing me, but I was still so scared! I didn't want him to hurt me again. But then I realized he probably would if I didn't do anything ... so I did what I had to do."

Demyx's breath was coming in long, deep spasms as he tried to calm himself down. His hands were up through his hair and he was shaking slightly.

"And that was the first time he had ever hurt you before?" The blonde jumped, forgetting the doctor was sitting across from him.

"Well, we would wrestle some times, but it never got serious. Like, he never actually hit me to hurt me. He would pin me down, but it was all in fun and games. I would get him down sometimes too. We never hurt each other. We loved each other. Why would you hurt someone you love?"

"But you said that you don't think Axel loved you, correct? After that first attack, do you think he still loved you?"

Demyx thought about his answer long and hard, biting at his bottom lip in concentration. "I think

so, yeah. It wasn't until about two years after that first attack that things really changed. But the second time he hurt me ... it came outta the blue again. Just like the first one. The only warning I had was the door slamming shut. It was three months later; I was standing in the kitchen, doing the dishes. There was no where I could go. I couldn't move quick enough. Before I put two and two together, he was already on me, punching me hard in the back. I held onto the counter when he grabbed my shoulders, shoving me down. I tried to move, to escape, but I knew I couldn't. Axel had always been stronger than me. But then he just froze, just like the last time. He stopped since he musta seen something shiny on the window sill. I took my ring off to do the dishes. I always did and he knew that, so he knew it wasn't anything bad that it was off. But it stopped him. He looked down at his own hand - I could feel his hair on the back of my neck and he moved his hand down to see his own ring. Then he just pressed his forehead into my back and started apologizing again.

"After a while ... he stopped apologizing. He would ... still stop whenever he saw the ring, but he stopped apologizing after ... the tenth time, maybe? Then he just ... kept hurting me and hurting me ... he didn't give two shits about me. I guess ... I guess I see that now ... but I ... I still loved him. I ... I loved him through it all. Until ... until ... I came home ... the first time I'd been allowed out in ... in years and I come home to ... to find that ... that whore in my bed. He was ... Axel had someone else in my bed! I was .. I was so .. so pissed. I normally ... never dared to get mad at Axel. But I was ... I was really mad. Really, really mad. He had a gun ... he had a gun out by the front door, in case someone tried to break in ... I got it ... I got it and ... and .. and I shot that whore ... Axel was off him and so I shot him. I was so mad. ... and then ... then I killed Axel ..."

The finality of those words hit Demyx like a physical blow, knocking the breath right out of his lungs. He couldn't see anything but the mutilated redhead, his eyes closed to the office around him. He knew the doctor must surely think him to be insane after his rendition and now his reaction, but he couldn't help it. He had killed Axel. That was that. He had killed the man he loved. When he seemed to get himself under control, still vibrating from the adrenaline pumping through him, he chanced a peek at the elder man. He was sitting there unchanged. There was an understanding look in his old eyes, but he didn't seem disgusted or concerned. There was understanding. Someone who understood! Demyx could have jumped for joy, but sudden moves still frightened him, afraid he would be punished.

"In the police report, they said that Axel was cut up and tied to a chair. Can you explain that to me please?" Demyx winced at the tone the elder man used. There was a small hint of confusion mixed with a mild dose of skepticism.

"I told you, I was mad. But I can't ... I can't talk anymore, doc. I ... my head hurts. I'm scared. I wanna go back to bed. I ... I don't even wanna be loose right now. I just ... please, take me back. I need .. I need to stop talking."

And so he did. Not another word was said by the blonde on his trek back to his room. He laid down without a peep, placing his wrists where they would be tethered. But the doctor didn't have the heart to punish a patient that had told him so much - too much - he only latched the shackle around the boy's left wrist. Demyx sent a curious look in his direction, but he didn't say anything. He just gave the man a half-hearted smile, closing his eyes before he could judge where his roommate was, proving to the doctor just how much his story had taken out of him.

But at least someone knew. It was too late, but someone knew.

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To Be Continued

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Desperation

"Demyx, wake up! Please, wake up!" Sora fought against his handcuffs, thrashing in an attempt to save the blonde. Demyx whined in his sleep, his dead husband's name escaping through his lips, unconsciousness still looming over him. He thrashed, metal clanging as he tried to move his shackled hand. Demyx shot his sightless eyes open, a scream building in his throat until it was rocking through the room, making Sora's ears hurt with the sheer volume of it. Focusing all of his attempts on freeing his arm, Demyx worked himself right out of the bed.

"Let go, let go, let go!"

Tears ran down Sora's cheeks in fear. Demyx looked possessed as he grabbed the twisted wrist connected to the metal bedside, placing a foot beside his whitening hand. "Demyx, wake up! You're going to break something! Don't pull! You'll scream again! Don't make me call the doc! I don't want you screaming again!" Sora tried in vain to wake the blonde from his nightmare.

"Let me go, Axel!" Demyx pushed off the bed, pulling as hard as he could, still under the shroud of 'sleep'. Sora heard the crack and crunch only a second before a blood-chilling scream reverberated around the room. Having no other choice, Sora pressed the emergency call button. The harder Demyx pulled, the louder he screamed, pain exploding through his shoulder and wrist.

Two nurses and the doctor rushed into the room, eyes growing wide at the sheer, overwhelming sound of Demyx's scream. One of the new-comers moved to comfort the sobbing brunette, while the doctor and second nurse crossed over to steady the blonde.

"Demyx, wake up. It's okay. No one's hurting you! Don't just stand there! Unlock him!" The doctor threw thoughts of being gentle with Demyx out of his mind as he pressed their bodies together, forcing the blonde closer to the bed, trying to keep him from getting hurt any worse while the nurse released him. "Demyx, it's time for you to wake up. Get up. Axel's gone. Wake up," the doctor hissed into Demyx's ear, embracing and falling back with him when Demyx gave one final push against the bed frame. The screaming dulled to loud groaning, softening to moans when the duo toppled to the floor. There wasn't a sound for a long moment before a pained moan escaped from Demyx's throat as his eyes drifted open.

"Wh-What happened...?" It took a second for Demyx's eyes to focus on the kind, old face he found himself looking up at. His head had been shifted into the elder's lap after they had fallen so he wouldn't accidentally crack it on the hard floor if he had started to thrash again. Pain covered his left arm and his throat felt like someone had taken sandpaper to it. He couldn't recall what he'd done to make it hurt so bad.

"You wanted to get away from Axel."

Demyx glanced down at his mangled wrist, aquamarine orbs shooting open in shock when he saw the scrapes of bloodied, shredded skin that had been broken by the handcuffs. Tears slipped down over his cheeks, eyes slipping shut to hide the damage he'd done to himself, hoping it would stop the pain. "Wh-what? Axel's ... dead .. I killed him ... how'd he.."

"It was a dream. You must have been dreaming about getting away from him. You wouldn't wake up until after you had already dislocated your shoulder and nearly broke your wrist."

Demyx whined, tilting his head back in the elder's lap, not caring about the fact that he was in physical contact with another person. His eyes opened in an attempt to gain more knowledge, hoping that seeing the man would make it seem less horrifying to have no memory of inflicting

such pain.

"Did I ... Did I scream? It hurts ... I ... It hurts."

An old hand dusted the scattered spikes away from those glistening eyes and Demyx moved into the touch, not having felt something so gentle for years. "Yes, you screamed, but everything is better now. You're safe. Here, I'll give you something to let you get some sleep. Just relax. It won't hurt nearly as bad when you wake up." Demyx nodded, feeling the doctor shift behind him, the hand staying on his forehead while the other took out a needle that would send him back into sleep - dreamless, Axel-free sleep. Another snap of pain, this time on his right arm and Demyx could feel the serum being injected, sending a shiver through his body. Soon he would be okay. Soon everything would be fine.

The pain was slowly covering his mind in a dense fog - or was it the sedative, Demyx couldn't tell anymore. He let his head loll over until his half-lidded eyes could pick out the vague silhouette of the brunette whimpering in his own bed. "So-.." he tried, his voice nothing more than a muted hush. Trying again, he achieved a small whimper. The third time he forced the name out, Sora answered.

"Demyx? You're okay?"

"So-ra .. I ... I'm ... sor-ry. I'm .. sorry. I .. I'm sorry I screamed ... I'm .. I'm sorry ... I ... I..." The words died on the blonde's lips when consciousness left him.

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"I know I'm not ready. But I owe it to him. I screamed. I know ... I know I had to remind him of Riku. I know I hurt him. I owe it to him to ask for him to be released. He deserves it." Demyx looked down into his lap, his hands clasped together in an attempt at keeping calm. Bandages wrapped around his left wrist but that was the only indication he had any sort of mental breakdown the day prior.

"Are you sure?"

"No. But it's still the right thing to do."

"Then I'll spend the night here, in case something happens."

Frightened eyes shot up to the doctor. "No! You can't! You're not skipping out on your wife for me! I'll be fine. Things will be fine. Sora ... Sora won't hurt me. Who knows, I might give him a reason for living again. We'll behave. You've got to go home to your wife. Then I can tell you how fine it was tomorrow, kay? Deal?"

The doctor seemed to think about it for a moment, the gears turning in his head. Demyx held his breath as he waited for an answer. The blonde didn't know what he wanted the answer to be. A small part of him still didn't trust his brunette roommate, but he did owe it to him. "Wouldn't you cover for him if he hurt you?" That answer threw the blonde off track.

Demyx bit his lip. He'd been taught for years to lie, to cover up the wrong-doings of others - and the doctor knew that. It wasn't like he could just change overnight. "But you would know if I lied to you. You know me so well, you would be able to tell just by looking at me to know if something bad happened!"

The older man sighed at the desperate smile on Demyx's face, shaking his head at the request. "I think you've finally gone insane, Demyx. But, if you insist, who am I to stop you? Just make sure you keep an eye on him. And know that I will be watching over the tapes if I suspect foul play."

Demyx let out a sigh of relief, letting his shoulders loosen but wincing at the twinge of pain he felt and another question hit him. "Yes sir, thank you. Thank you so much. But, before we wrap it up for today do you think ... can you tell me why I freaked out yesterday?"

It took a second for the doctor to get back onto the blonde's page, but a grim look crossed his features when he did. Demyx felt his heart rush at the look, wondering if maybe there was something wrong with him, maybe he did deserve to be locked up in the nuthouse he was in.

"Axel scared you, didn't he, Demyx?"

Not expecting the return of a question, Demyx tilted his head in confusion. He thought about it for a second, trying to word the answer in his head before saying it aloud. "I .. Yeah, he did ... But ... But he was a good guy. Just ... I wasn't scared of him. I was scared of what he would do to me. You think ... You think it was because I was scared of him? I lived like that for a real long time, doc. When I was with him, nothing like that ever happened. I never freaked out like that."

"Do you remember how you felt yesterday when you were telling me? You may not have reacted that way while he was alive because you never actually had to relive it. Things sounded like they would work out fine after he hurt you. I could see the panic in your face yesterday. The fact that you had to relive all the horrors he put you through and how you broke down the barriers that had kept those memories locked up; it all added up to give you the breakdown you experienced." Demyx opened his mouth to say something, but the doctor wasn't finished. "And the reason why you don't remember what happened was because of the part of your brain a man named Sigmund Freud – have you ever heard of him? Brilliant man - called the Superego. It is the censor that wipes out all the worst parts of our dreams. I can't begin to imagine the horrors that you have gone through to give you such a horrible experience in reliving them. But how do you feel now, now that you've told someone, now that you've unblocked those dams?"

Demyx just felt confused. It took a while for all of that information to seep into his brain and to get over the fact that the doctor had answered his question without him even needing to ask it. So, there was a part of his brain ... that blocked out the worst of the worst things? And it broke the day before to give him those horrible nightmares? But had repaired itself so he didn't remember what happened in those nightmares? The whole thing made Demyx's head spin.

Concentrating on the doctor's question, Demyx searched his mind, burning holes into his hands with such an intense stare. "I ... I do .. I do feel a bit better, yeah. But ... at the same time ... I'm still scared. Will I always be scared?"

The doctor took on one of his kind smiles. "You might be. But you might not be. It's all a giant mind-game, Demyx. You have every right to be scared forever. No one will blame you if you are. Only you can change how you feel. I don't scare you, do I?"

The answer was instantaneous and Demyx blushed when the words left his lips. "No, of course not! You're old! You can't ... hurt .. me ... I'm so sorry! I didn't mean it like that! It's just that-"

"It's okay," the doctor cut him off with a laugh, the humor finally reaching his eyes. "It's true. I'm no spring chicken. But because I'm old, I won't hurt you?"

Demyx shook his head, cheeks flushed red. "Not won't. Can't. I could move faster and when you get old, you get weaker. So ... It wouldn't be like someone younger, like Axel or .. or Zexion. They could hurt me because I wasn't fast enough. I'm ... I'm weak."

"You're not weak." the doctor pointed to his right arm, just above the elbow. "I've got quite the nasty bruise that you gave me yesterday." The blonde's eyes opened wide at the words.

"Wh-What? I-I hurt you? How? I'm ... I'm so sorry! Please forgive me!" Desperation lined the blonde's voice, but the elder man kept his smile as he rolled up his sleeve to show the patient the battle-wound. Horror wiped over Demyx's features when he saw the baseball sized bruise.

"You didn't do it on purpose. You were still unconscious, but you tried to get me off of you and you elbowed me. I can tell you right now, you're not weak, Demyx."

Demyx hid his face in his hands, shame flooding him. "I didn't ... I'm so sorry!"

"It's alright. But, back onto the topic at hand. Am I the only one that doesn't scare you?"

Demyx didn't remove his hands from his face as he thought, finally looking up when he had his answer. "Your wife doesn't scare me, even though I never met her. She has to be nice, since she's your wife. She makes really good cake. But ... that's about it. I ... I only .. I feel like you're the only one I can trust. I shouldn't trust you, since I started off hating you because you left me. But you're the only one I can turn to. I used to ... I used to be able to turn to .. all of my friends. Marluxia, Roxas ... Cloud. But they're all gone now. The last time I spoke to Cloud ... it was ... at my wedding. But he said ... said he was going off with his wife to Radiant Garden. Heh, even my own brother ..."

"You have a hard time getting to trust people because everyone else in your life has either left you or hurt you?"

"I ... I guess. You're the doc. You're supposed to tell me what's wrong with me and how I can fix it."

"We're getting there, Demyx. Be patient with me. I'm an old man, not a miracle worker. But let's call it a day. You're already well past the time your session ends."

Demyx followed the elder's lead, standing from his chair and facing the door. "Got Sora's key?"

"Got it."

"Can I show you that I'm not weak? Can you try it on my neck again? I won't freak out this time." Demyx slammed his eyes shut in preparation for the cold metal about to touch his skin, willing himself to show nothing when it brushed against his neck. "What do I do if ... if I do spazz out like I did yesterday? Can I do anything to stop it?"

The duo started down the halls and Demyx concentrated on the words the elder was saying, committing them to memory so that he would never have to go through something like that again. "Stop it? I don't know if there is any way to stop it once you've already passed a certain point. But just make sure you keep your breathing steady and get your mind away from whatever the thoughts are that trigger it. If you're thinking about Axel and start to feel panicked, stop thinking about him; think about anything other than what is making you feel that way. You'll notice your breathing starts to quicken, you curl in tighter on yourself and if you're speaking, it takes you a while to get your words out and when they do come, there is a lot of repetition and broken, fragmented sentences. You look like you're about to explode when you've reached your breaking point. Your eyes close tightly, trying to block out the world. Does any of this sound familiar to you?" Demyx shivered, nodding.

"Yeah. Too familiar. That's exactly what happened when I was talking about him. But ... I can hardly stand it when someone touches me, right? That's because of Zexion? So .. what do I do if someone touches me and I start to freak out? What do I do then? The same things?"

"Basically, yes." They had reached the door to Demyx's shared room. He knew the brunette lay

waiting inside. "Make sure you remove yourself from the trigger as quickly as you can. If you're uncomfortable in a situation, remove yourself from it." The key was removed from his neck and

Demyx took in a large breath. "Ready?"

"Ready."

The two moved into the room, Demyx offering his hands to the elder man.

"Can't you do that outside? You don't gotta mock me, ya know?" Sora pouted in his bed, staring at the too-white ceiling. Demyx laced a beaming grin onto his features, taking the key that would release his roommate from the doctor.

"Actually Sora, we're not mocking you. 'Specially not today. Look." Demyx held up the key for the brunette to see as he let his eyes fall onto the blonde.

"Why do you got that? Doc? What's goin' on?"

Moving towards the bed, Demyx made sure that the key stayed in plain sight. The beaming smile turned to something softer, more genuine and apologetic. "Look, Sora, I'm sorry about yesterday. I didn't mean to scream. I feel really bad about it. And .. to make it up to you, I begged the doc to let ya go. So, sorry." Demyx unlocked the brunette's handcuffs. The moment they were off, Sora was up, springing off the bed in joy. He grabbed the older convict in a tight hug, making Demyx tense, fear rocketing through him. He couldn't handle the thoughts crashing over him as his breath was being squeezed from his lungs.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

Demyx couldn't reply, eyes bulging, heart racing. The panic was welling up inside of him.

"Demyx, what did I just get finished telling you?"

The doctor's voice triggered the words that had only been spoken a moment ago. "S-Sora ... Sora, please let go. Sora, let go of me! Please!" Demyx worked his way out of the hug, falling back against the bed next to the brunette's. His breath came in short gasps and he knew he had been on the verge of a breakdown. From such a simple act, one that he had always loved when he was younger ... it was all ruined thanks to Zexion. "I'm sorry, Sora. I don't like it when people touch me. Or when people move really fast. You ... You scared me really bad." Sora backed away at the words, sending a nervous glance over to the doctor still watching from the door.

"I-I'm sorry. I'll try to not touch you or move too fast. I'm sorry!"

"Don't worry about it. I'm fine." Demyx turned back to look at the doctor. "I'm fine. Tell your wife that I say hi when you see her tonight, kay?" The doctor looked unconvinced for a moment more before nodding.

"I will. You boys behave tonight."

"We will," was echoed by the convicts, sending the man from the room.

"C'mon, Sora, let's go listen to some music, okay?"

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"I'm fine, doc. Don't worry about me."

"It's not you I'm worried about. I still don't think I can trust Sora."

"He didn't do anything after that first hug. He's a scared little kid. He watched his boyfriend get murdered. He told me that yesterday. He told me more about it. I dunno if he's told you, but it's scary what he went through! And I was right. He said that I sounded like Riku. That's how the whole conversation started. I don't ... I feel so bad."

The doctor sighed, his hands on his desk. "It's not your fault. You have no reason to feel bad."

"It's just in me to feel bad. Plus the fact that I've been taught that everything's my fault. I even learned that. When I was still in high school. I took this course and we covered this thing on abusive relationships. I knew I was in one. But I loved Axel. I know I don't have to convince anyone but I just want you to know that I did love him. But, yeah, in this class, we learned that one of the things in an abusive relationship is that the one being abused is always at fault. Well, thinks they are. I think that might be what kept me going ... I knew it wasn't really my fault - that Axel just needed someone to blame. But it doesn't stop me from always blaming myself, ya know?"

Demyx was surprised he was able to recall that small tidbit of information he had thought he lost after all the brutal attacks. "I'm sorry, Demyx. I shouldn't tell you how to feel. Just as long as you still know that it isn't your fault. You can't control what other people feel."

"I know. Oh god, I know. If I coulda controlled how people felt, I definitely would have made Zexion hate me."

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To be Continued

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Untouchable

"Demyx ... you're not asleep yet, are you?" The blonde opened one eye a crack to peer into the near-darkness of the room around him. He could hear shuffling across the floor that sent a shiver through his spine, nearly having forgotten that Sora was still allowed to run free even though he had been able to for nearly two weeks now.

"I'm still awake. Why?" Not really the truth, but the blonde didn't think he needed to explain that to the boy.

Demyx's body tensed when the voice came from somewhere closer to him. "I can't sleep. I keep hearing him. I don't want to hear him anymore, Demyx. He just keeps screaming and I can't sleep." There was nothing Demyx could say to comfort the boy, his mind foggy from the beginnings of sleep. "I don't ... want to hear him anymore." The sound came from right behind him and Demyx stiffened, feeling his heart slamming into his chest. "I can't-"

"Ahh! Sora! No!" Demyx cried out when he felt the bed shift next to him, the brunette crawling up next to him, snaking an arm around the elder man. "Ah! Sora, let me go! Let me go! Please! Don't touch me!"

"Make him stop screaming." The haunted words froze the pumping blood in Demyx's veins. His attempt to shake the brunette faltered even as the nightmares flooded his mind.

"P-Please, do-don't put your arm around me. I'm scared. Sora, you're scaring me. I can't make him stop screaming when I'm scared." Demyx felt himself curling into a ball, but forced his breathing back to normal, remembering what the doctor had told him. Just stay calm. The arm was slowly drawn away, but the boy stayed next to him on the bed.

"C-Can I stay here tonight? I ... I don't want to hear him screaming." Some part of the blonde knew that even if he could tell the brunette that he couldn't stay, Sora wouldn't move. Sighing, Demyx moved farther away from the younger boy to give him enough room on the small bed. Images of Axel laying beside him in the hospital flashed through his mind, but he willed them away. If he couldn't accept the horrifying events that Axel had caused he wouldn't put up with the good ones either.

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"You look troubled."

Demyx didn't raise his eyes to meet the elder's. "I'm so ... stupid."

"What makes you think that? I find you to be a rather intelligent boy."

"I don't .. I don't feel like talking about it today. I just .. I just wanna go home. I wanna forget all this ever happened. I just wanna ... go curl up in my own bed ... and I want to sleep. I want Axel to be there and I want him to ... to ..." Demyx couldn't even force the words out as a lump grew in his throat. He found tears leaking out from his eyes, dripping down his cheeks to land on his clenched fingers. He didn't want to cry. Crying meant he was weak. Being weak meant being easily taken advantage of. But for once they weren't tears of fear or anger. They were honest, genuine tears of sadness. "I want things to go back to how they were." His voice was less than a whisper but he didn't care if the doctor heard him or not.

The doctor couldn't do anything to help the crying boy, having to sit by helplessly as Demyx

shook with the effort of holding back the tears. "It's okay, Demyx. You don't have to hide anything from me. You're allowed to cry." Demyx leaned forward, resting his elbows on his knees and covering his face with his shackled hands. His fingertips moved up to pull at his blonde hair. The harder he cried, the harder he pulled until he was nearly doubled over, sobs wracking his body.

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Demyx's face lit up at the sound of the new song starting on the CD the doctor had made for him. A month had passed since Sora was first released and the two were laying on the floor in front of the stereo, listening to songs from their pasts that the doctor had burned onto a CD for them. "C'mon, c'mon, get up! I wanna dance!" Sora looked up as the elder shot to his feet, giving him an odd look.

"But it's a slow song. You can't dance to it."

"It's not that slow! Just, c'mon!" Demyx grabbed Sora's hands, pulling the younger up to his feet. Closing his eyes, Demyx swayed to the beat, humming under his breath, the smile never leaving his lips as he forced Sora to spin circles with him. "Do dodo dodo dodo dodo dodeedo do. Me and Axel ... we danced to this ... this was our favourite song ... it's what ... we had our first dance to. Dearly Beloved." The circles grew larger and more intricate as Demyx spun, overwhelmed by the memories. He began to laugh to hide the tears that were forming in his eyes.

He wasn't sad. He was happy. He'd waited so long to feel this happy, to hear this song again, and now he was spinning with a boy that wanted to use him to get rid of his own nightmares. But Demyx was happy. It wasn't Sora that was holding his hands, following his lead.

It was Axel.

They were back on the dance floor and all eyes were on them. His parents weren't there, but Cloud was looking on happily with his wife nestled in his arms. A few of the friends he still held dear were whooping and hollering, as ecstatic for the couple as Demyx was.

Then it ended and Demyx nearly expected the kiss that always followed the song, but it didn't come. The circles he was spinning in slowed until finally he collapsed, his eyes opening onto the harsh whiteness of the ceiling. But he was still laughing. "Oh, Axel, I wish you coulda been here. It was on. Our song. Dearly Beloved. It played. I haven't ... heard it in so long." Demyx lay with his arms spread wide, the grin on his face even wider, his legs bent at the knee. Blinded and numb by the pure joy he was feeling, Demyx didn't notice Sora as the brunette slid down over his legs, leaning back against them as he sat at the elder's waist, trapping him in with a foot planted firmly on either side of his chest. The pressure on his abdomen was what alerted Demyx to the situation. Panic flooded him when he found the grim-faced brunette staring down at him. "S-Sora, wh-what do you ... think you're doing? Get off me! Get off!" Demyx thrashed, crying out as thoughts of Zexion's defilement washed over him.

"Why do you get to be happy? I don't want you to be happy if I'm not happy. If I'm not happy, you're never going to be allowed to get happy!" Sora ground out the words, leaning forward and pinning Demyx's shoulders to the floor. A scream ripped through the room. Demyx couldn't help it. It was Zexion back, attacking him, about to defile him, about to break his sanity into a million tiny pieces.

It was the fear that allowed Demyx to work his hands up onto Sora's chest. It was the fear that gave him the strength to push up, shoving the younger off of himself. The fear pushed him enough to sit up. Sora toppled back when Demyx gave him another shove. The moment that the weight was off of him, Demyx was scuttling back until his back met the metal of the nearest bed, his

knees coming up to his chin as still the horror flashed through him. He curled himself into the tightest ball he could manage, his screams having ended when he had fought back. He could feel himself dipping into a panic attack, but he wouldn't allow it.

Remembering the doctor's advice, Demyx closed his eyes, forcing his breaths to come slower, taking in as much air as he could with one gulp until the edge to the panic started to dwindle. His whole body was shaking, the happiness he had felt seemingly a million miles away now. "Don't ever do that again, Sora. Don't you dare." The blonde shot the younger a venomous glare, not even caring about the tears that freely flowed down Sora's cheeks.

"You shouldn't get to be happy!" Sora shrieked, righting himself. "You shouldn't get to be happy! You're more fucked up than I am! Why do you get to be happy when I'm not?"

"Because I've learned that I've gotta let things go in order to get better! Do you want to get better, Sora? Do you? Then you have to let things go."

"Then you should be able to let me touch you! If you're gonna preach that you gotta let things go, you gotta let them go too!"

Demyx felt like he had just been slapped in the face. A cold chill ran over him even though it was a comfortable temperature in the room. "I'm trying ..." The words were a whisper through the blonde's lips. "I'm trying. I really, really am. But you're not helping. In order to get over it, I gotta get used to it slowly. You can't just ... you can't just sit on me and expect me to take it. It would be like you physically reliving whatever happened to Riku over and over. Not just in your head, but every feeling that happened with it. You ... You have no idea what it's like. You have no idea." The anger lining his voice surprised Demyx. He wasn't mad. He was just scared. He didn't want it to happen ever again. Was that so wrong? Why couldn't Sora understand?

Sora forced himself up, showing the anger that was in Demyx's voice. "Well, you have no idea either. You don't know what it's like to have to kill someone because they were killing your best friend, your only friend, your boyfriend. You don't know what it's like to hear your boyfriend screaming your name, begging to live. You have no idea."

But he did. He knew exactly what it was like to have the person you love saying your name, begging for their life to be spared. What pain Sora didn't know was being the one that held the string to his lover's guillotine.

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There was a soft knock on the door and Demyx stiffened, not used to the disruption while he sat in the doctor's office. Something in him wanted to turn to see who the intruder could be but another part of him knew it was none of his business. "Come in, come in."

The door creaked open but Demyx concentrated on the smiling man in front of him as much as it worried him to leave his back exposed. "I'm not interrupting anything, am I?"

The voice made the blonde's blood run cold. He knew that voice. He hadn't heard it in ages, but he knew that voice. His eyes slammed shut, willing away the dream - as that was all it could be. "C-Cloud?" Demyx's breath stuck in his throat while the doctor stood, moving around his desk, putting his hand out as he went. Demyx followed with his eyes that had opened to watch the man. His breath stayed in his throat until he took in the elder blonde standing in the doorway. A moment of shocked joy splashed through the patient, quickly being devoured by disbelief and embarrassment. "H-How'd you ... How'd you find me here?" In a psych unit. In a prison. In a doctor's office in a psyche unit in a prison for the criminally insane.

"I'm sorry I didn't come sooner. I didn't know until I came back. I'm sorry." Demyx didn't know what the elder was apologizing for but, following suit, the younger brother stood, but stopped when he noticed the doctor inconspicuously inserting himself between the two. Demyx knew that Cloud wouldn't be able to tell that the doctor was worried but he could.

"It's alright." It was true. The statement was to both the careful doctor and the apologetic brother. Demyx forced his gaze away from his brother, onto the man that stood between them. "I'm not gonna hurt him, even if I wanted to. I couldn't. My hands are useless right now and Cloud's always been stronger than me. He could take me even if I was able to go at him. Not that I'd want to. When have you known me to take the violent way out, huh doc?" The younger blonde offered his hands, palms up in surrender. "I'm a good kid."

The words met a tense moment, the elder blonde looking between the brother he hadn't seen in years and the doctor that separated them. "You don't think ... My bro? Puny Demy? Man, I know I haven't seen him in ages and he was a crazy kid, but you don't really think he'd hurt me, do ya, doc ... I mean sir." Cloud sounded sceptical, moving past the doctor to put an arm around the younger brother. The doctor moved forward, horror lining his features as a warning cry spilled forth. Demyx stiffened at the contact, taking in a sharp breath and bringing his arms closer to himself. "Dem?" Cloud looked down in confusion at the younger boy.

"P-Please ... L-Let me go. L-Let me go." There was a frantic pitch to Demyx's words as he pulled from the elder's grasp. He stood facing Cloud, nearly doubled over and shaking his head back and forth. "D-Don't ... Don't touch me ... unless ... Unless I touch you first. Please ... That's like ... one rule ... One rule I have now." Demyx took in a few shaky breaths, his wrists pressing hard against his knees to keep him on his feet. The shock of seeing his long-lost brother was setting him up for a breakdown as his mind tried to cope with so many obstacles at once.

"Demyx, breathe. Make sure you breathe. Remember what I told you."

"I-I .. I'm trying, god damn it! It's .. It's fuckin' hard! All I see is Zexion! Fuckin' Zexion! Fuck that bastard!" Demyx felt himself slipping, but he wouldn't allow it. He had to breathe. He had to take in as much air as he could. He had to forget. Being normal meant forgetting. But it was so difficult.

"Zexion? Dem, what'd I do? What'd I do wrong? I didn't mean to! Dem!"

"J-Just ... Just shut up for a second! Can't you see I'm not okay right now? Can't you see it's something bad? Ask the doc later! I can't .. I can't tell you ... I .. God ... I ..." Demyx felt like he was going to be sick as his head swam with images and feelings, his feet feeling unstable beneath him. Was this what the doc had called his 'Superego'? He dropped to his knees, laying his forehead against the floor between his elbows, his arms outstretched. "No ... No ... I .. I don't ... I don't want to remember! I don't want to remember anymore!" Demyx dug his nails into the carpet, clawing at it in an attempt to forget.

"What the hell happened to him? What'd I do? Doc, gimme some answers here!" Cloud turned wild eyes on the doctor that was powerless to help his patient.

"What do you care?" The words were a low growl, something far quieter than the screech that had just left the blonde's lips a second earlier. It was so quiet, Cloud had to question if he'd heard anything at all. "What do you care? You ... you shouldn't pretend, you know! You .. You left. You left me all alone! You and Axel ... You were all I had left! And look where that made me end up! Look how that played out! I'm ... I'm in a fuckin' mental hospital! Where were you when I needed you? Where were you when ... when Axel ... You left me alone with that monster! You could have saved me, Cloud! But your wife was more important than me. She was more important, wasn't she? You didn't care about your faggot little brother! You left me!" Tears

refused to come to the younger's eyes even though that was all he wanted. He wanted to feel something other than desperation and anger. He couldn't stand feeling his sanity slipping away. He could feel it physically leaving him, making his world topple over. It was like all the blood was rushing from his head, his vision swimming, his body swaying.

"I ... Demyx ... I didn't know ... You .. You sounded so ... So happy when I would call. Why didn't you tell me?"

"Oh, so it's my fault now? It's my fault that Axel beat me? Why does everyone say it's my fault? It's not my god damn fault! It's not! It's not, it's not, it's not! I ... I ... Oh God..." Demyx felt how raw his throat was from screaming the words at his brother. He knew he would regret everything he said. But that didn't mean he could take it back. What was said was said. It could never be taken back. "I'm ... I'm crazy ... I'm ... Don't listen to me, Cloud ... Please, don't listen to me."

Cloud couldn't take it any longer. He couldn't take the pain that filled his brother's voice. He had to find a way to comfort him, to make up for all the times he wasn't there. He fell to his knees beside the younger blonde, putting a hand on his shaking shoulder, removing it as quickly as it made contact, reeling back at the blood chilling scream that erupted from the younger brother.

The doctor rushed forward, snatching a needle from his desk as he went.

"What do you think you're doing, you idiot? Didn't he tell you not to touch him? Obviously you've had no experience around a mentally disturbed person. If you keep that up, Demyx will become a permanent resident here!" The doctor roughly grabbed a hold of the thrashing arms, forcing them down to the younger's sides, injecting the sedative as quickly as he could. The screams started to fade until there was nothing but Demyx's shallow breathing. "Will you do what is requested of you from now on? If not, I shall have to ask you to leave my patient - for his own well-being."

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To Be Continued

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Attachment

Demyx groaned at the bright white all around him. The music was playing softly in the background. He tried to move his hand to wipe the sleep out of his eyes, but he found them both safely secured to the bed. Another groan and he laid his head back up against his pillow.

"Hey! Guys, c'mere, he woke up! He-ey Demyx!" Sora's cheerful face appeared beside him and he felt something cringe inside of him, not liking the fact that the younger was loose around him while he was chained up in bed.

"Demyx?" The new voice made memories of the last time he was conscious enter his mind. Laying on the floor of the office, screaming until his throat was raw, being embraced by his brother...

"Cloud? Cloud, you're still ... here?" He could still feel the grating of his voice in his raw throat, but it was worth it to be able to see his brother again. Cloud moved into view on the opposite side of the bed as Sora, the doctor joining him. The elder blonde started to reach out for his brother's hand but stopped, remembering all the commotion such a simple act had caused earlier. Demyx noticed the action and smiled a small smile, all he could manage in his groggy state. "It's okay ... I'm not gonna ... I'm not gonna spazz out anymore. I .. I should be good now." Cloud took a deep breath, letting it out in a sigh of relief. He laced their fingers together, bringing his lips down to give the hand a soft kiss.

"I'm sorry. Doc told me everything. I'm so sorry. If I had of known ..."

"There's no sense worrying about it now, is there? What's done is done. You can't change it. All I can ask is for you to be more in my life now. Don't leave me all alone anymore. Well ... I guess I always have the doc ... and Sora ... but ... you can come around and see me too, can't you?"

The elder's face grew more apologetic at the words. "A-Actually-"

"You're scared of me because I've completely lost it? Because I'm not the Demyx you remember? Because of what certain people have done to me?" The smile was still on Demyx's face. "It's okay. I wouldn't want to see me again either after that."

"No, Demyx ... It's ... That's not why ... Dem ... I would come back if I could. But ... I leave for Radiant Garden in a few hours. I was only home for a week for Mom's birthday. But ... now I have a reason to come back, right? I gotta ... I gotta be there for my bro."

A forced chuckle was all Demyx could muster. "Don't worry about it. I've done fine without ya this long. Even if ya just wrote or something ... that would be nice. But ... how'd you know ... how'd you know I was here?"

The grip on the younger's hand tightened. "Mom told me. She showed me the clip from the newspaper. All I knew was that you killed someone and had come to this place for it. If I had of known what that asshole was doing to you ... But you're safe now, right?"

"I'm safe now. No Axel, no Zexion ... I'm peachy."

"Oh Dem, I'm sorry."

"Would you stop apologizing? It's fine. I'm fine. Promise."

Cloud stood, glancing at the watch on his wrist. "I've gotta get going, Dem. Are you ... okay with

a kiss on the forehead?" The younger blonde nodded, letting his eyes slip closed when he felt his brother's lips on his forehead, wishing the moment wouldn't ever stop. It'd been so long since he'd felt someone genuinely care about him. "I'll come back to visit. I promise. And I promise I'll stay longer next time."

A true laugh this time. "I'll believe it when I see it. Hurry up or you'll miss your flight." Demyx kept the smile on his face until his brother said his final goodbyes and left the hospital room. Then the younger blonde turned his eyes onto the ceiling. "I'm never gonna see him again, am I, doc?"

"I'm not sure, Demyx. Sora, do you think you could give us a moment? I need to talk to Demyx in private please." The blonde gave the elder man a questioning look, but Sora nodded, keeping his happy-mask up until he sat on the bed closest to the radio. "I'm worried about you for tonight, so I'll be keeping you locked up. Are you okay with that?" Demyx smirked, sending his gaze back at the ceiling.

"It's your call. I've gotta be okay with it."

The doctor ignored the smart reply, continuing straight onto his next question. "What do you want me to do with Sora? It's completely up to you. Do you want me to lock him up for the night or-"

"No. He hasn't done anything bad. He shouldn't have to pay for my mistake. Let him stay loose."

The doctor nodded slowly after a moment, obviously not liking Demyx's decision, but going along with the blonde. "I'll be in the office for another hour, so if you need me, you just have to press that button, okay? And I'll tell them to alert me at home if you need anything."

"Doc, man, really? No. Don't worry about a thing. I'll be fine. I trust Sora. I know I'll be okay. You just go home and have a nice supper with your wife. Maybe bring in some dessert for me tomorrow."

The older man shook his head. "Demyx ... You told me yourself that I would know you're lying. Why are you lying to me now?"

"Just go, okay? It's fine. I'll be fine. You can watch the tapes tomorrow if you don't trust me."

A sigh and the doctor was moving around to the end of the bed. "I trust you, Demyx. Please don't let anything happen that would make me regret this."

"I'll be good."

Giving him one final look that said 'it's not you I'm worried about', the doctor left the room. The moment the door had closed behind him, Sora was up and bounding over to the blonde's bedside. "Jeez, it's about time they're all gone! So, what happened to ya? Finally crack? Finally see that you're never gonna get over it?" Frustrated with the lack of response from the blonde, Sora jumped up on the bed, a knee on either side of Demyx's. "I heard all about your story. I heard all about how you were raped by that bad, bad Zexion. I heard about how you were beat around by your ex-hubby. Look at me!"

Demyx could feel the emergency button burning in his hand, begging to be used. But he didn't feel the defilement. He was numb. Every ounce of strength had already been spent in his previous breakdown. The only thing that registered in his mind were those last three words. "Don't ... Don't say that." His hand tightened around the button until he felt it ripped from his grasp, dangling uselessly over the bedside. But he couldn't fight back. He couldn't feel a thing. He had let the dam break so nothing could hurt him anymore. Just as he could think about Axel without screaming, he could feel another person touching him without thinking of the pain. He was numb, broken, fixed.

"Oh-ho, why not? Strike a nerve?" Demyx forced his eyes closed, hoping he could block out the feeling of Sora brushing against him.

"It's .. I told Axel to look at me when I killed him. It ... makes me think of him. I-" Demyx's words were cut off when he found Sora pressing their lips together. Panic flooded the blonde but he couldn't move, even after Sora pulled back, breathless.

"Shut up. I don't care what you've got to say. Let's just pretend you're Riku right now. That's what I'm gonna do. You're Riku. You're not Demyx and you're not fucked up. You're Riku." Sora pressed their lips together once more but quickly gave up on that when he realized Demyx refused to participate in the activity that was making his mind blur with thoughts of Zexion. But he had to be strong. He had to make sure that the doctor wouldn't get mad at him. Facing away from where he knew the camera to be, Demyx screwed his eyes shut, begging for the treatment to be over. He wouldn't cry out. He wouldn't be weak anymore. Maybe ... if he thought hard enough ... the feathery caresses could be those of the one he loved instead of a defiler.

It was no longer Sora kissing up the side of his neck. He forced his mind to think it was Axel. That was the only thing that kept the scream hidden deep down inside when hands traveled up under his shirt.

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"You let him take advantage of you? The moment I left? Demyx, I thought you said you would be fine!" It was the angriest that Demyx had ever heard the easy-going doctor. He couldn't look at the elder, shame still looming over him from the night before.

"You saw it, didn't you? I ... I couldn't, even if I wanted to. He ... He took the button away from me. And ... And I thought it would help me get over ... get over what Zexion did to me..."

"And? What's your conclusion? Did it help you any? Do you feel any better, knowing that yet another person has taken advantage of you?"

"Actually, yeah, it did help. He was gentle and ... and didn't go too far and ... and I thought of Axel ... so that I wouldn't ... get scared... It worked. It really ... it really worked. .. I'm sorry I didn't ... I'm sorry you had to find out about it like that." Demyx covered his face with his hands, cowering. He knew he had disappointed the doctor, knew he had betrayed his trust. "But Sora didn't take advantage of me. I took advantage of him. I used him, Doc. I'm ... I'm just as bad .. I'm as bad as Zexion."

The doctor let out a sigh, folding his hands on his desk. "Why don't we just say that you both used each other to bring back the memories of people you've lost? Does that make sense?"

Demyx thought about it for a second before looking up at the doctor. "What did Sora tell you? I ... I want to know what was going through his head. Does he know that I was just using him?"

"You know I can't talk about that, Demyx."

"Yes you can! It's about me! You should be able to talk to me about it if it's about me!"

"I'm sorry Demyx."

The blonde sulked. He wanted nothing more than to cross his arms and sit there with his lip out in a pout, but since his wrists were locked together, he merely stood from his chair, unsettling the doctor but moving away from the old man. He just couldn't sit still any longer. He'd had a long night with Sora staying close by him until the nurses came in to fetch the brunette for his session. Demyx wanted to know what Sora had thought of the whole thing, wondered if it would happen

again. Would he want it? He hadn't had any of the nightmares he had expected, but now Zexion lingered just on the edge of his consciousness.

"Zexion's in jail, right? I'll never see him again?"

"Right?" It was obvious that the doctor didn't know where the questions would lead.

"Then ... with Sora, I can feel normal again. He needs Riku back. If he wants to pretend I'm Riku, if it means he'll get better, I'll do all I can for him. If I can make him better ... that would give me an excuse ... a reason to live. I'd have a purpose. So doc, tell me, did he say he thought of me as Riku?"

"You're trying to trick an answer out of me, aren't you?"

"Well, would you prefer it if I asked Sora himself? What if I'm wrong? He might try to hurt me if I say it the wrong way. You wouldn't want me getting hurt, would you?" A mischievous smirk played over Demyx's lips when he knew he had trapped the doctor.

"There's not a single thing wrong with your mind, is there, Demyx? You're a very smart boy. Now if you get hurt by him, it's all my fault. I didn't take you to be such a cunning boy. My mistake."

Demyx paced across the expanse of the small room, waiting for the answers he longed for. Maybe he had done something stupid, but he didn't regret it. He didn't know he wasn't going to regret it while it was happening. He'd just gotten lucky. He didn't regret the small bruise at the base of his neck, the lingering feeling of hands on his chest, heat enveloping his body. He shivered just thinking about it. How long had it been since he'd felt good? Sora managed to make him feel alive again, whether he was just a memory of Axel or not.

"I wanna keep doin' it." He refused to meet the older man's eye, afraid of what he might think. He wasn't some filthy, dirty whore. He was human. But how he had gone from shuddering away at even the slightest touch to longing to writhe beneath a near stranger confused and scared him. "I know I shouldn't, but why not? I've gotta get over what happened to me. If it feels right, do it. Right? That's ... That's what Cloud told me when ... when I told him I was gay. It feels right ... with Sora because ... because he's so small. He's small and gentle and if I wanted to get rid of him, I could. Zexion did it to hurt me. Axel did it to hurt me in the end. So I think of Sora as ... as an early Axel. So ... tell me what he's thinking so I know if I'm gonna be safe doing that. Or should I just tell him to leave me alone? Ugh, doc, this is getting complicated in my mind." Demyx crouched down, throwing his arms over his head, wrapping them around to shield him, pulling at his blonde spikes.

"Sora didn't say much to me today. All he said was that something happened between the two of you last night and told me to watch the tape. He sounded scared, like he had done something wrong. But he told me that he would have stopped if you asked him to. Do you believe that?"

Demyx felt his stomach roll. "I ... I don't know ... Maybe. Probably. He ... he stopped before." After I shoved him off me, Demyx finished in his mind, not wanting to admit that anything else had happened between the two. He already regretted the words that left his lips.

"Before?" Demyx didn't respond. "Demyx? What do you mean before? Do you mean that something like this has already happened?" The blonde knew he would get no peace until he had answered the man's questions.

"He didn't tell you? He jumped on me a while ago. When you gave me that CD. We danced and then I was happy. He got mad at me for being happy so he did the one thing he knew would make

me not happy. He jumped on top of me and pinned me down. I thought for sure he was gonna try to ... try to hurt me real bad. Like Zexion. But I stopped him by screaming. He can't take screaming, you know. It's the easiest way to get him off of ya. Since it reminds him of Riku. Right?"

The doctor looked troubled as Demyx peeked through his fingers. "I shouldn't let him be loose."

"No! Have you not been listening to me? I'm fine with him doing whatever! I can get away from him just fine if I need to! Don't lock him up because I'm weak, because I'm broken!" Demyx shot to his feet, getting dizzy from the sudden movement. He stumbled a little, but caught himself before he fell. "Don't punish him. He's more broken than I am." Demyx faced the doctor's desk, backing away slowly, shaking his head. He stiffened when his back met the door and he slid down it, bringing his knees up, burying his face, taking steady breaths. He was scared.

"Demyx?"

"Maybe not. Maybe I'm more broken. Since Cloud's been here ... no ... ever since I hurt myself that night ... I've been really ... messed up since then. ... Have I ... Am I really insane, doc? I'm ... I'm still here, so I've got to be, right? I've lost my mind."

"You've made a lot of improvements here, Demyx. Do you remember the first day you were here?"

He's got a gun! It's ... not loaded? He's already used all the bullets. Someone get in there and grab him! Grab him! Demyx felt sick at the man's voice ringing in his mind, seeing Axel slumped in his chair, a knife protruding from his chest, bullet holes shattering his body. The blonde could still feel the recoil of the small hand gun, hear the pin hitting nothing, the man tackling him to the floor with his own gun pointed straight at him.

"How ... could I forget?"

"You haven't been like that for a long, long time. You've been through a lot. You're allowed to be scared."

"No! No, I'm not! I'm not! If I'm scared, I'm weak! If I'm weak, I get hurt! It's not okay for me to be scared!"

Nothing that the doctor could say would make Demyx calm down and he knew this, sitting back down in his chair. He waited for the blonde to uncurl himself, lowering his defences. Finally Demyx rubbed at his eyes, his breathing back to normal, staring up at the elder man with bloodshot eyes. "I just want to go home. I wanna go sleep in my own bed. I wanna be rocked to sleep. I want things to go back to the way they were."

"You can have a happy life without going back to the way things were, you know."

Demyx nodded slowly. "I know. It's just what I'm used to. I know that I'm the one that's to blame for ... for changing everything but I just ... I just couldn't take it anymore. You believe me, right? What would you have done in my place, hunh? What would you have done?"

The doctor shook his head. "I'm not sure. You never know how you'll react in a situation until you're placed in it. I doubt I would have been able to put up with it for nearly as long as you. You're brave, Demyx."

Smirking, Demyx staggered to his feet, struggling without the help of his hands. He didn't say any more but stared at the place that he knew the key to be kept. He just wanted to go to bed and sleep for the rest of his life. The two walked back to the room that Demyx shared with the brunette

without another word. Finally the doctor's hand was resting on the handle, hesitating to open it, fearing for his patient. "Doc ... I wouldn't watch the tapes from now on if I were you."

"I still don't think it's a good idea."

"I'm a big boy. I can take care of myself."

Demyx held his hands out, waiting for the handcuffs to be released. The doctor didn't follow him into his room like he normally would and Demyx felt his stomach flip when he saw Sora sprawled over his own bed, drumming his fingers on his exposed stomach, his shirt having shifted while Demyx had been gone. He looked over at the sound of the door closing and his face flushed red. "Are you in trouble?" Demyx flashed his free wrists in response, making the brunette's face light up. A warning flashed through the blonde's mind and he felt himself begin to put up defences. I thought you wanted this, his mind echoed the words and he forced a small smile.

"I'm .. really tired though. I just ... want to go to sleep for a bit, okay? I had ... a little breakdown today. I'm tired."

The smile only faltered a little, but flickered back into full force as Sora moved from his bed, slowly stepping towards the blonde. "Then, I can help you get to sleep! When I was going to bed, Riku would always lay there next to me. It really helped. Just to know someone else was there, ya know?"

Demyx didn't know how he felt about the idea of Sora laying there next to him, but he had a hard time resisting when the brunette stopped in front of him, only a little ways away from his bed. Taking the elder's hands, Sora leaned forward, leaving a small kiss on Demyx's jawbone. A small spark of fear ignited inside the blonde, but he refused to let it win. He just nodded, allowing Sora to lead him back. He moved into his bed, laying on his side. Sora got in behind him, throwing the blankets over them both and wrapping his arms around the taller man. Demyx closed his eyes and was shocked to realize how much it felt like Axel nestling into the back of his neck, pulling him tight.

Maybe this could work after all.

Thoughts of Zexion slowly drifted from his mind.

xXx

"He's screaming again. Demyx, make it stop. Please?"

Demyx gave the younger a soft smile before gesturing for him to move closer. It'd been a month since that first time when Demyx hadn't been able to protect himself. But now he drew the brunette in willingly. He still pictured the younger as his dead husband, still allowed himself to be caressed, doing some of the caressing himself at times. When the brunette needed him, he was there. Today he allowed himself to be pinned to the wall, Sora brushing needy kisses along his neck, his knee moving between the elder's. Demyx moaned out at the feel, clutching at Sora's back while trying to get every inch of them together, melting them together so that it wouldn't be pain and fear he felt.

Sora ran his tongue over the soft skin at the base of Demyx's neck, running his hands up under the elder's shirt. Demyx leaned closer, needing lips on his own. Over the month he had become so needy, such a beggar as he felt Sora's tongue slip into his mouth, running over the thin scar on his own. A shiver ran over the elder's body when he was reminded of how he had gotten the scar. Flashes of Zexion, of horror, defilement and then nothing but the explosions of pleasure coursed through him. Their lips parted, each taking in gasping breaths until Sora could get his wits about

him. Biting down to show his ownership over the blonde, beginning to make a mark on the elder's neck, Sora raked his nails over Demyx's chest, making the blonde gasp and press them closer together.

Then Sora made a small trail of bites up the blonde's neck, making him cry out. Axel was the only one that knew how much he enjoyed that. Only Axel had ever made him feel so good. "A-Axel," he couldn't help but breathe. He had been wafting between fantasy and reality but fantasy had won out. Sora stopped mid-bite, backing away from the elder.

"Wh-What'd you just say?"

Demyx tried to catch his breath, confusion spilling across his features. He hardly realized the name he had spoken. "Wha... What?"

"Why did you just say Axel?" Anger creased the younger boy's face and he backed away from the blonde. "Why'd you say Axel?"

Demyx pressed himself against the wall, not trusting the look of rage enveloping the younger. "I ... Sora .. why are you so mad? I .. I thought..."

"You were thinking of him, weren't you? All this time?! You're supposed to be with me! Why were you thinking about Axel?"

"Y-You just think about R-Riku, don't you?" Shivering, Demyx tried to get away from the advancing brunette, being trapped by an angered fist slamming into the wall beside him.

"No! How could you think I was just using you? Is that all you were doing? Were you letting me screw around with you ... so you could get something out of it? How could you, Demyx? I trusted you! I trusted you!" Sora grabbed the elder's shoulder, slamming him against the wall. "Were you just fucking with me all this time?"

"S-Sora, if I hadda known ... I'm sorry. But .. It wasn't .. I didn't just think of Axel, ya know! I ... You made me get over Zexion."

Sora's fist connected with his cheek, making a strangled cry of shocked fear escape the elder convict. Not knowing what had started this onslaught, Demyx tried to get away but found Sora toppling down on top of him, fists clenched, preparing to attack the defenceless blonde again. "You used me! You used me Demyx! How could you?"

"It's not like you have any feelings for me, right? Let's ... Ugh, Sora, just get off me! Please! I'm not scared of you! Just get off me!"

"Get .. off .. me?" Sora's face went blank, but he kept his hands on Demyx's shoulders, "Riku ... Riku, I .. I'm ... I'll help you. I have to ... Ahh!" Sora leaned his head down onto Demyx's chest, screaming at the top of his lungs from a danger that the blonde couldn't see.

"Sora? Sora, what's wrong? Sora?" Demyx tried to get out from under the screaming boy, but Sora clung to him.

"Make the screaming stop! Make it stop! Make him stop screaming! Riku! Shut up, shut up, shut up! Just shut up!"

"Sora, you're the one screaming! Stop, please, just let me go!"

"Make it stop, make it stop, make it stop!" Sora moaned, burrowing into Demyx's neck. When he couldn't hear his own screams anymore, the brunette whimpered, clutching tighter to the blonde.

Having finally calmed down, he looked up with watery cerulean orbs. "I can't do this anymore, Demyx. I can't live with him screaming and screaming and screaming. And for messing with me, you're gonna help me make the screaming stop. You're not allowed to be happy if I'm not happy. You're not allowed to be alive if I'm not alive. I'm not gonna be alive if I hafta listen to any more screaming." Sora's voice took on an innocent pitch with a hint of hidden malice and pure insanity. His hands moved from the blonde's shoulders to run against his neck.

Fear washed over the elder inmate and he tried to move his hands to fight off his attacker, but Sora held them tight by his side with knees trapping him down. "S-Sora, what are you talking about?"

"I'm gonna kill you, Demyx. That way, you don't have to use me to fuck Axel. You don't have to use me and I don't have to hear Riku screaming anymore."

Demyx cried out when he felt those fingers dusting over his neck tighten, strangling him. He wanted to scream, to cry, to be saved but he knew that there was no one to save him. Axel was dead. The doctor had been told not to watch the tapes as Demyx knew that the older man wouldn't want to see his patients being so intimate. There was no one that would be able to stop the brunette from strangling him right there on the floor. He had to fend for himself.

Gasping for air that he so desperately needed, Demyx found the strength somewhere deep inside himself, spurred on by his overwhelming fear of being killed, to free his hands and grab at Sora's, prying them off his throat. He didn't bother trying to throw the brunette off as long as he could keep those two hands under control.

"Sora," the blonde cried after he had caught his breath, surprised at how sore his throat was even after such a short time. "What the hell was that all about?"

Sora wrestled his hands free, shooting up and off the blonde. "No! No, no, no, no, no! I don't want to hear it anymore! You're supposed to die with me!" Insanity was scrawled over the brunette's face as he stumbled back, shaking, his fists clenched by his side. "I want you to die with me!"

Demyx's eyes were wide with panic as he propped himself up against the wall he had been pressed to only a few moments before. He had to get away from Sora, but there was nowhere for him to run. If Sora wanted him dead, he would die. "Sora, no! I don't want to die! I'm getting better! You can get better too! It'll be okay!"

"You call this okay?" Sora spread his arms wide, his voice raising in volume and pitch. Palms raised towards the heavens, the brunette glanced around with paranoia evident on his features. "This is not okay, Demyx! We're holed up inside a mental institute! We're insane! We've been shoved in here and forgotten about! I dunno if you remember what the outside world is even like, what okay is like, but it sure as hell isn't this!" Panting, Sora allowed his arms to drop to his sides, his body shaking as his gaze fell to his feet. "That's why I need to get out of here. This place ... it's just making me even more insane. I just want to see Riku again. But ... How can I get out, Demyx? How can I die? Will you do it for me? You've killed people. You've killed two people. You can kill another one."

Demyx just shook his head, horrified by the change in his roommate. "N-No ... I ... I was really .. really mad ... when I killed them. I-I'm not mad right now."

"Haven't you ever wanted to die, Demyx? You've had to have felt that way after all you've been through, right? Right? What did you do? How are you still here?"

A chill ran over the blonde, knowing that Sora knew exactly how he was still here. Someone had caught him just in time, just before he could have bled to death. Someone had saved him. There

was no one to save Sora. Demyx ran his tongue over his lips, trying to wet them now that they felt incredibly dry. Tears were in his eyes and he tried to slip farther away. He could see a grin slipping across Sora's face, nearly breaking it in two, a malicious glint sparkling in his half-hidden eyes.

"Your tongue. That's how. That's how you almost got out of here. All I have to do ... What do I have to do, Demyx? What did you do to get those scars? I've felt them enough, but what did you do? Let me see it!"

Sora staggered forward, dropping to his knees in front of his roommate, inching forward, preparing to pry the blonde's mouth open if he had to. Not enjoying the thought of that outcome, Demyx allowed his bottom jaw to drop open, exposing his tongue like he was at the doctor, his eyes wide and horrified. He used his hands to push himself closer to the wall, trying to be as small as possible. "Now, what did you do to it, Demyx? Why? What were you running from? Why aren't you doing it now? How can you want to 'live' in this place?"

Not knowing which question to answer, Demyx just pulled his tongue back inside his mouth, not daring to take his startled eyes off of the younger prisoner. Sora flashed his hand out, grabbing Demyx's shoulder again, making him gasp and try to squirm away, but Sora held him still. "What did you do to your tongue, Demyx?" The words were poison to his ears, every letter making the blonde cringe. His breath was coming in short, small gasps.

"B-Bit it."

"Why?"

"Z-Zex ... Zexion."

That malicious grin was back on Sora's lips as he pushed himself away from the blonde, stepping back. He stuck out his tongue, laughing. It started off as a few low chuckles before soon he was nearly gasping for air at the magnitude of his laughter. Demyx hadn't caught the joke, but was glad to have the brunette away from him. He didn't relax, watching with nervous eyes, Sora keeping his own gaze fixed on the elder the entire time. Then the humour ran dry and Sora's face went blank, his tongue slipping past his teeth, almost like he was trying to find the sharpest point he could. "So all I have to do is bite down and then I can be with Riku again? No more screaming? No more being lied to? No more being deceived? Thank you, Demyx. If it wasn't for you ... I would still be alive."

"No! Sora! No! No, no, no, no!" Demyx shrieked the words, but they fell on deaf ears as Sora bit down on the pink muscle that was peeking out from between his strong teeth. His cerulean orbs were shut against the world as crimson blood started to bubble down his chin. He refused to scream, to show any signs of pain at all. For all Demyx knew, the brunette was too far gone to feel pain. "No! Sora! No! Please stop! No!" Unable to take it anymore, Demyx stumbled to his feet, grabbing onto Sora's shoulder's trying his hardest to keep them upright, but his momentum carried them crashing to the floor. The impact forced Sora's tongue down harder until the teeth released their prisoner. In shock, Demyx scurried backwards, only stopping when he found himself up against one of the beds. "Sora!" Horror still flooding his system, Demyx hardly realized that he was up next to his own bed. All he could hear was the strangled gurgles from the brunette. He clamped his hands over his ears, but he couldn't block out the sound. It was stuck inside his mind ... just like the screams had been for Sora.

You've gotta call for help, Demyx. Look at where you are. All you have to do is hit that little red button and then you can sit there and cry like a baby. Do you want him to die? Do you want him to end up like me? Hmm? Do you?

Demyx's eyes shot open, his hands flying away from them, the tears halting for a moment. He spun wildly. "Axel?" The words had sounded so close, as if his departed husband were sitting right beside him. "I'm crazy." It had all been in his head, but it forced him to realize there was still hope. They had saved him, hadn't they? When he had tried to die? The tears were back as he scrambled up to the side of his bed where the alert button lay innocently. He pressed it once, twice, three times before finally just keeping his thumb pressed down on it. He could still hear Sora behind him, choking, gurgling, dying and it horrified him. But for as long as he heard those horrifying sounds, he knew that Sora was still alive.

It was when those sounds faltered that Demyx had to worry. He couldn't look back, he couldn't move. Nurses rushed in, making as much noise as they possibly could but he refused to let go of the button. Chaos surrounded him until finally the doctor sat on the edge of his bed, resting a hand on the frightened blonde's shoulder. Demyx cringed at first until he looked up with wet eyes. The moment he recognized who it was amid the turmoil around him of screaming orders and a rushing gurney, Demyx dropped the emergency button and latched himself onto the old man. He crawled up to bury his nose in the elder's neck, wrapping his arms tight around him.

"It'll be okay, Demyx. You're okay."

You're safe.

Demyx only felt a little safer in the old man's arms.

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To Be Continued

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Home

Demyx refused to eat, to talk, to even move after Sora left his room. He couldn't bring himself to do the things that Sora could no longer do himself. Axel spoke to him all the while, being drowned out by the sound of choking and gurgling more often than not. He knew he had lost it. He knew there was no going back for him. He was a lost cause.

"Demyx, it's been a month. Will you talk to me today?" The old doctor had grown far older in that long month of watching Demyx get thinner and thinner until finally a feeding tube had to be inserted into his stomach. He hadn't played with it or fussed, but he couldn't eat on his own. He knew that the old man feared for the blonde's life. But really, did Demyx deserve to live? Sora would still be alive if it hadn't been for him. "Fine, I'll talk to you. The nurses tell me that you're losing even more weight. Why won't you eat anything? It's not doing anyone any good." A frustrated sigh sounded from behind the blonde as he lay on his side, determined to face away from the old man trying to help him. He felt that usual hand on his shoulder, but he refused to comply to it, refused to turn and face the doctor. "I could have my wife make you some pie if you like." Demyx visibly flinched at the word 'pie', the scar on his back flaring up in remembrance. Of all the things that had happened, he thought that would have been the least likely to stick but apparently he was wrong. "It's obvious you can hear me or you wouldn't have tried to pull away when I said that. Why won't you talk to me?"

"I-I ..." Demyx faltered at the sound of his own voice, not having heard it in a month. He had nearly forgotten how to speak. He wasn't sure why he was trying now. "We ... can't be friends anymore." The words had been bouncing around his cluttered mind for a while now, growing with intensity every time that the doctor tried talking to him. But never before had he gathered the courage to tell the elder man what he was thinking. He still refused to look at the only one he had left, but at least he had said one of the many things that had been on his mind.

"What do you mean?" There was confused relief lining the doctor's voice as he removed his hand from the blonde's shoulder. He received his long-awaited reply.

"No offence, doc, but you're old." The blonde's voice was small, quiet, fearful. He didn't know if the old man could even hear him. But he continued anyways, his words wavering as a lump formed in his throat. "I ... I can't lose anyone else. You're old and old people die. If anyone else leaves ... I won't be able to handle it."

"Demyx-"

"Don't bother!" Anger lined the younger's voice now and his fingers clenched tight around the sheets that had been pulled up to his chin. He was curling in on himself which he knew was a bad idea with the tube sticking out of his stomach but he just couldn't take it. "I'm not gonna kill myself or nothin' like that, but Sora really messed me up!"

"I watched the tape, Demyx. I've watched it more than once. I was his doctor. I could see the warning signs. He didn't want to live anymore. If you think that you're the reason he died, you'll never get over it."

A blush lined the blonde's cheeks when he realized that the old man had seen how he had given in to the brunette. "What if I don't want to get over it?"

"You'll be happier if you do."

You don't deserve to be happy! Sora's words echoed in his mind and he wrapped his arms around

himself, trying to save himself despite the small ache in his stomach. "I don't deserve to be happy."

"You're going to take the words of an insane man to heart?" Demyx didn't reply, but felt that hand move back up to his shoulder. "Demyx, look at me." Axel, look at me. Demyx forced his own words away, rolling onto his back. His eyes slipped shut as his head turned towards the old man. "Demyx, please." They opened slowly, moving to be on anything other than the one he was letting down. "You're getting worse." A sudden wave of anger flowed through the blonde and he rolled back onto his side, ignoring the throb in his stomach.

"I have a tube coming out of my stomach because I refuse to eat. Yeah, I can kinda see I'm getting worse." The cooler air outside his defences rushed against his back that had been exposed in the shifting. It made his scar burn - or was that just his imagination? "Just leave me alone. You try watching one of your only friends kill themselves because of a slip of the tongue. Just because I said Axel instead of Sora. A slip of the tongue. That's how quick a life can end. I'm not gonna risk it. I know I'm worse and I know that there's no way I'm gonna get better."

"It's not your fault, Demyx. Trust me, it's not. I've already told you that Sora wanted to die. You just happened to be with him."

Neither spoke for a long time, Demyx wondering if he even wanted to get better, the doctor wondering if he had the right stuff to make the blonde see what needed to happen. "Maybe .. Maybe all I need is time. It's ... I don't know how long it's been, but ... but it doesn't feel like it's been long enough. I can't ... I ..." The machine beeped beside him - a loud, angry beep - and Demyx winced. He knew what was coming next. He knew that he would soon be writhing and wishing he hadn't been so stubborn. His face grew darker, his blush deepening when he realized no one had watched him during his 'feeding' process yet. He clamped his eyes shut so he wouldn't have to watch the juicy mush travel down the tube, right into his stomach. He groaned in discomfort as the first few dribbles made their way into his nearly-empty stomach. His breathing started to come in sharp gasps. He felt sick, like he was going to force the food out of his stomach before it all went in.

"Demyx, are you okay?"

The blonde shook, hating the feeling of his stomach filling without the food first passing through his mouth. He knew he should have been used to the treatment by now but some part of him believed it would never get better. It was a treatment for someone that had no will to move on their own, someone in a coma, someone who had no choice. Demyx had a choice. He still had enough of his mind to know that this wasn't right, wasn't natural. "I-I'll eat on my own now!" He cried out, desperation forcing the words out in a rush. "Please, just ... just no more of this!" His head was spinning and he felt dizzy, his heart hammering in his chest.

The doctor stood, moving over to the machine, tapping in a code. Within seconds, another loud beep sounded, signalling that the torture was over. Demyx shot a hand down to grip at the tube in his stomach. He was smart enough not to haul it out, knowing that it got wider the farther in it went so that it wouldn't fall out easily. He just wanted it out of him. Moments later a nurse rushed in, shock and confusion on her features to find the doctor at the controls. "S-Sir, what are you doing in here? And ... why did you stop the machine?"

The old man turned one of his smiles on the woman. "Demyx has agreed to eat on his own. Had I known he was in so much discomfort, I would have insisted on having this ... contraption uninstalled long ago!"

The nurse bowed a little in apology, knowing that the scolding wasn't completely directed at her. It hadn't been her idea to hook the blonde up to the 'auto-feeder', as they called it. "I'm sorry, sir, but orders are orders."

"Go tell the person responsible for this that I would like to have a word with them in my office in ten minutes." The doctor turned his cold gaze on Demyx, letting it melt there as a charming smile spread across his lips once more. "Promise me you'll try to get better and I'll bring you in some of my wife's cooking for you."

Tears sprinkled Demyx's lashes as he looked at the doctor. "I-I'm .. sorry for the trouble I caused sir ... I'm sorry ... for being so weak."

"It's okay, Demyx. I understand. But we're going to help you, okay? And I'm still your friend, even if you don't think I should be." The doctor reached out, brushing sweaty locks of blonde away from the boy's flushed face. Demyx pressed into the touch. Maybe things would turn out better after all.

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Demyx sat up, wincing as the stitches pulled at his skin. A small smile laced on his lips at the plate that the doctor held in his hands as he made his way into the room.

"You're looking rather happy with yourself today. You look much better now that you're no longer hooked up to that God-awful contraption. But, as promised, a nice meal for the cooperative patient." Demyx felt his mouth water even before he could see what the doctor held in his hands. The smell of cheese and tomatoes drifted towards him, making the innocent smile on his lips broaden. The haze of anaesthesia still lingered, but Demyx had been trying to ward it off for the half hour he had been awake after the surgery to remove the tube.

"Thank you, sir. I ... I really don't deserve it."

"You do. I can't very well give you a key as a reward anymore, now can I? You've got this whole room to yourself. You're not in chains. What else do I have to use to bribe you into behaving?"

Demyx frowned. "You shouldn't have to bribe me." Noticing the mistake, the doctor uncovered the food on the plate, handing it to Demyx as he sat on the edge of the younger's bed.

"No, you're right. Bribe was the wrong word. It's a reward. It's hard sometimes, but if you get rewarded, it's worth it, right? It took a lot for you to admit those things to me yesterday. It was even harder for you to have someone watch you going through something so horrible. You know, you're changing a lot of lives. I'm going to see if I can get that system changed so that other people in worse predicaments than you - that don't have a voice - don't have to go through that torture. You deserve this meal, Demyx."

The blonde took in the lasagne with hungry eyes. He hadn't had real food since the cake for the doctor's anniversary. He took the fork he was handed after with shaking fingers. Back before things had fallen to ruin for him he had always loved the cheesy Italian food. "Thank you, sir."

"Hey, I told you we were friends. No need for formalities." Demyx blushed, but didn't respond.

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"Demyx, did you know that you're nearly ready to leave this place?"

Aquamarine orbs opened wide, confusion spilling on the younger's face. "L-Leave? But ... I can't ... Unless ... Unless I go to jail ... I .. There's no way I coulda served my sentence yet. Doc, I've killed people. How can I leave?" A mocking smirk was spread over the doctor's lips.

"Didn't I tell you? The courts ruled it as a case of momentary madness. As soon as you show signs

of being sane, you can go back to living a normal life."

"Just like that?"

"Just like that."

Demyx crossed his arms over his chest, hunching his shoulders up to his ears. "What if I don't wanna? I like it here. It's ... repetitive here. There's no surprises. I like it." There was a knock on the door and the doctor's smile broadened. Demyx thought for a moment that it was his brother coming back to pay him a visit, but knew not to get his hopes up.

"Why don't we talk about your arrangements after you leave here later. For now, there's someone I would like you to meet." Demyx turned in his chair to see an older woman standing in the doorway. A blush lined Demyx's cheeks and he sat up straighter. He wanted to impress this woman for some reason. "Demyx, this is my wife." His bright eyes shot open once more, taking in the woman more clearly, noticing the puppy at her feet. He stood and rounded his chair, bowing deeply to the woman.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you! You're an amazing cook and it's so good to finally meet you in person! The Doc's told me loads about you!"

Happy whining came from the dog at her feet and the woman smiled, motioning for Demyx to stand back up. "He's told me a lot about you as well, Demyx. But I'm not the one he wants you to meet right now. This is Luxord." The leash that the puppy was on grew longer and it bounded for the blonde, jumping up at him, trying to lick his face. Demyx couldn't help but start laughing, toppling to the ground with the dog going all over him. Its soft, bleach-blond coat felt so good against his fingers. He didn't even notice the doctor moving to stand beside his wife.

"He's your last test, Demyx. If you can take good care of him, you're free to go."

Demyx's face screwed up as Luxord's tongue lapped at it, nearly working its way into his mouth. He wrapped it up in a hug, trying to get it away from him, to calm it down. "Y-You mean he's ... mine?"

"For a few months. Then he comes back to stay with us."

A frown made its way onto Demyx's glee-filled features. "Then ... so you're gonna make me be friends with him ... then take him away from me in a few months? Are you sure you're not the crazy one, doc?"

"I said that he would be coming back to stay with us. I didn't say that he would be taken away from you."

Confusion crinkled the blonde brows, his arms tightening around the pup defensively. "But ... I don't get it."

"A term of your being released from this prison is to stay with one of the doctors until you are ready to become a functioning member of society again." Demyx just gaped at the old man. Luxord had settled comfortably in his arms, knowing he would get no more licking in any time soon. He was content there, sharing the warmth. "Demyx, you have grown on me. If you can look after Luxord for a few months, you may come live with my wife and myself until you feel you're ready to leave."

A disbelieving chuckle left the blonde on the floor, tears of joy sprinkling his eyes. "Y-You're kidding, right?"

The doctor shook his head, beaming, his wife with a large grin on her own wrinkled features. "No, I'm not. We never had any children of our own, so taking care of you for as long as you need would be wonderful for us."

Demyx released Luxord, jumping to his feet and wrapping the elderly couple in a tight hug, digging his nose into the older man's neck. Luxord jumped up at the sudden commotion as the doctor and his wife returned the hug. "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

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"Luxord, sit." The dog complied easily, looking up with hard, concentrating features. His heavy tail wagged once, a large thump on the floor. "Good boy. Speak." The golden lab lifted his front paws off the ground a little when he did as he was told, the bark echoing around the white room. "Good boy!" Demyx praised, rubbing the spot between the dog's ears for a reward. Luxord had nearly doubled in size in the short while since he had been in the blonde's care. "Alright, now, go get your ball for the doc, kay?" Luxord sprang to his feet, running to the far end of the room, digging under the last bed to snatch up his yellow tennis ball, bring it back to sit at Demyx's feet. "Nope, to the doc." Demyx pointed to the man just a little ways behind him. Luxord stared for a moment, following the finger until he spotted the man in the doorway. He trotted over, sitting and letting the ball drop from his mouth.

"Demyx, I must say, I'm impressed. He'd be a good show dog if you keep training him like that. Seems you've got a way with animals."

"Luxord, c'mere, bud." The blonde patted his thigh and the dog barrelled over to him, nosing at the hand presented to him, forcing his owner to pat him. Demyx smiled, looking up at the elder. "It's nothin' really. May as well teach him to do stuff if we're both holed up in here the whole time. One walk a day wasn't much for my growin' boy." The heavy tail thudded against the floor at the attention he was receiving.

"Well, I think that you can go for as many walks as you want to when you go home." The doctor pulled a leash out from behind his back and Demyx's face brightened. The leash and collar were tossed to him and he latched Luxord into them.

"That's today then, isn't it? Won't it be weird? You really trust me? You think I can do it?"

"I trust you, Demyx. Come on. My wife made a large supper just for you tonight."

Demyx pulled on the leash to get Luxord to follow him and the dog jumped into motion, staying directly beside the blonde's right side, only falling behind when they had to walk through the door. The doctor was on his left side as they left the blonde's room for good. "I-I'm .. I'm kinda scared, doc."

"I know. I know it's scary, but you'll get used to it. Just know that Luxord and I are always by your side." Demyx smiled, nodding. He was free. He was finally going to show the world that he was normal. Axel hadn't said a word since the tube had been taken out of his stomach and even the sound of Sora's death had dulled with the many hours of looking after Luxord. But what was the world like outside of these walls? Would it be the same as it always had been?

His thumb moved to that place on his left hand that used to house his ring. He didn't have anything to fear out in this world. He was leaving all the demons behind. He was sane. He was free and he was sane.

"Good night, doc. Oh, and Demyx, it's so good to see you leave these doors! Truly a miracle of God!"

A strange wave of unease washed over the blonde and he stopped to look at the secretary. Her smile wavered for a second, but never disappeared. He returned it but with a hint of confusion drawing his eyebrows together. "Silly girl. Obviously you haven't learned much working here. There's no such thing as God. Not in my eyes, anyways. Why would an all-powerful God let good people go through the horrible things I've gone through? Sure, it might be a miracle that I'm leaving, but it definitely isn't by God."

Zexion's words rang out in his mind, how there was no God to save him from his torture.

No, it hadn't been God that had gotten him through all of those trials. It had all been thanks to the doctor that had abandoned him in order to save him. If anyone deserved the credit, it was him.

Demyx watched the secretary's smile vanish and a blush crept across his cheeks. "I'm sorry, ma'am. That was really outta line for me. I just wanna go home."

An arm wrapped around his shoulders and the blonde was pulled close to his saviour in a reassuring hug. "You'll be home soon enough. I can already see the car."

Demyx didn't know how much more smiling he could do. His cheeks burned but he was so happy that he could hardly feel the pain. His grip on Luxord's leash tightened until the two clamoured into the back seat of the doctor's car.

Soon enough, Demyx's hand was entwined in the soft half-puppy fur of his best friend, watching the buildings flash by from his back seat view.

This was it. He was going home to a place where people would love him. He was finally normal again. A fire burned inside of him. He knew he wouldn't waste this second shot at life he had been given. He wouldn't let his past hold him down.

Demyx nuzzled into the strong neck of the dog sitting beside him. "Are you excited, Luxord? We're goin' home!" The dog only turned and gave Demyx's cheek a lick in response.

xXx

The End

xXx

The fact that this whole thing stemmed from three words and a pairing amazes me. At one point I was thinking of sequel and prequel, and I still know what I would do for them both, it's just a matter of getting up the drive for writing again. May possibly happen, but I wouldn't hold my breath.

Also, 'How did Demyx get out of jail so fast? That doesn't make any sense!' I know. But the doc didn't tell Demyx everything that had happened, all the fighting that had been done to prove that he was safe and whatnot because he didn't think that Demyx could deal with it or that he would even understand. But that'll be in the sequel if it gets done, so, if that's something you've had a problem with, I'll try to clear it up later. I don't want it being a repeat of the Rookie Rule about the underagedness. It just happens, so, go with it for now. :D

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